



# Ocean Watch Action Committee Meeting Notes

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Friday, September 23rd, 2022 from 9:30-11:30 am via Zoom (see recording)

*The purpose of this committee is to advance the actions recommended in the 2020 Ocean Watch Howe Sound report.*

**Participants:**

Bowen Island Municipality:

[Bonny Brokenshire](#), Manager of Environment and Parks Planning

District of West Vancouver:

[Heather Keith](#), Senior Manager of Climate Action and Environment

Town of Gibsons:

[Michelle Lewis](#), Natural Asset Technician, [Annemarie De Andrade](#), Councillor

District of Squamish:

[Chris Pettingill](#), Councillor, [Sarah McJannet](#), Planner

Gambier Island Local Trust Committee

[Kate-Louise Stamford](#), Trustee

Metro Vancouver:

[Marcin Pachcinski](#), Division Manager

Marine Stewardship Initiative – Make Way Charitable Society:

[Courtney Smaha](#), Project Director, [Bridget John](#), Program Manager

Marine Life Sanctuary Society:

[Adam Taylor](#), Board Member

Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society:

[Ruth Simons](#), Project Lead, [Hasan Hutchinson](#), Board Member

Squamish Nation: Environment Manager

[Julie Aeyelts](#), Rights and Title Department

Nicholas Sonntag Marine Education Centre:

[Jenny Wright](#), Aquarium Curator

Guests:

[Stephanie Hewson](#), Staff Lawyer, Marine Program, West Coast Environmental Law

[Clare Greenburg](#), Executive Director at Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council

[Aroha Miller](#), Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative and Nicholas Sonntag Marine Education Centre

**Moderator:** Ruth Simons, Executive Director, Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society (HSBRIS)

**Note Taker:** Bridget John, Program Manager, Marine Stewardship Initiative (MSI)

## ACTIONS

1	Biosphere looking for more feedback on <a href="#">Unity Plan</a> . <a href="#">Sign up for Future of Howe Sound Forum on November 5, 2022</a>
2	Michelle to share more detail/link from UBCM ministerial meeting
3	Islands Trust Local Trust Committee to update <a href="#">Action Tracker</a>
4.	BIM and MSI to share the dates for upcoming screenings of <a href="#">Uncharted Waters</a>
5.	Submit marine debris sightings and share <a href="#">MSI's Marine Debris Reporting system</a>
6.	Think about setting up a dedicated fund for marine debris
7.	OWAC to establish task force on monitoring for Invasive European Green Crab in all of Howe Sound and support ongoing work of <a href="#">SSISC</a>
8.	NSMEC to share marine debris data with MSI if able
9.	Reach out to MLSS if interested in the coordinated response workshop regarding rockfish enforcement. Reach out to MLSS for an educational outreach seminar
10.	Submit any feedback on changes to the format of the OWAC to Ruth.

**NOTES:**

AGENDA	DISCUSSION	ACTION ITEMS/ DECISIONS
1. Review last meeting's notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Last OWAC before the municipal elections</li> <li>● Action Tracker is a valuable tool for the following Ocean Watch report or alike and can help identify gaps</li> <li>● Marine Protected Areas project - update from Stephanie Hewson WCL               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Marine protection focused around key species</li> <li>○ Still working on the analysis and hope to be moving forward to feedback in the new year</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Biosphere looking for more feedback on Unity Plan</b>

2. Share community updates related to the [Action Tracker](#).

- District of Squamish
  - Lots of work done over the past few years on completion and implementing actions from the Community Climate Action Strategy (includes housing, transportation and waste management)
  - Completed MEEP (Municipal Energy and Emissions Plan) to reduce municipal GHG from district ops
  - Adopted low carbon incentive program to minimize impact from housing and discouraging use of high carbon energy in residential construction
  - Demolition waste diversion bylaw
  - 3rd reading on Marine Zoning Bylaw - coming forth for adoption on October 4th
  - Amended OCP and strengthened objective to reduce GHG emissions by aligning with IPCC values to limit warming to 1.5 degrees
  - The UBCM membership supported “NR47 Protecting BC Coasts from Acidic Washwater Dumping” and “NR48 World Class Shipbreaking Regulations for BC and Canada”. The full book for resolutions is at: <https://www.ubcm.ca/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022%20UBCM%20Resolutions%20Book.pdf>
  
- Town of Gibsons
  - Council made a motion for staff to protect Chairman Creek and Watershed, links with Gospel Rock. OECM could be another method here.
  - Request for proposal for DPA2 (wildlife corridor, buffer zones, keystone species habitat)
  - UBCM ministerial meeting about watershed protection - well received by the Province.
 

Asks:

    - Support local government and First Nations to examine a potential regional watershed governance model
    - Adequate and ongoing funding for local planning, monitoring and restoration efforts underway or proposed
  - Conversations with SCR D regarding watershed protection

**Michelle to share more detail/link from UBCM ministerial meeting**

- Watershed protection and monitoring proposal for Chaster Creek Watershed (salmon-bearing streams), tributaries impacted by logging.
- Climate Resiliency Strategy being updated (looking at GHG emissions target, carbon neutral plans, natural asset management, etc) → \$73,000/year in funding for four years
- District of West Vancouver
  - Proposal to develop Climate Action Strategy (with new IPPC targets to reduce GHG emissions, adaptation, protection of natural assets, carbon budgeting framework for corporate decisions)
  - 1.5% environmental levy on taxes, amounts to ~\$1.2 million/year towards climate action. was approved by council → moved into environment reserve fund bylaw in July 2022 (can use for community programs, strategy, reserves fund for action plan)
  - Adopted foreshore development permit area last spring for private properties, now looking at how to protect public amenities and district infrastructure from flooding and sea level rise, hopefully using nature-based solutions (for e.g. Ambleside Park)
  - Final stages of the urban forest management plan (actions to increase declining tree canopy cover and improvements to our tree bylaws and regulations)
  - At UBCM, Climate and Energy Action Award in climate adaptation category presented to DWV for foreshore policy
- Islands Trust Local Trust Committee
  - Continue to work on foreshore protection bylaw for Keats Island as the island is quite developed
  - Gambier Community Plan is starting with a focus on canopy conservation in forests, foreshore protection, supporting climate action, etc. 74% population increase in the last census.
  - Islands Trust policy statement moving along, focusing more on climate change
  - Will update the Action Tracker with specifics
  - Islands Trust Conservancy is signing off with the Federal Government for more support for species at risk funding for all reserves in IT.

**Islands Trust Local Trust Committee to update Action Tracker**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bowen Island Municipality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Took part in MetroVan marine debris clean-up (3 cubic meters of styrofoam and 50 tires removed, and lots of other debris)</li> <li>○ Stewardship campaign to protect an islet. 2 Black oystercatcher fledglings that flew from the island which haven't been seen in a while</li> <li>○ Good year for herons (7 fledglings). Urban and rural herons act differently. Herron policy.</li> <li>○ Screening of a film coming soon: Uncharted Waters. BIM gave some money for this. Probably be in November. Add to Action Tracker</li> <li>○ Council passed a conservation development policy for rezoning that says natural needs at least half. Took four years for the policy to pass.</li> <li>○ Site alternation bylaw passed - more environmental protection</li> <li>○ CRC park in its infancy - Cape Roger Curtis Area. Proposed to be a park with camping</li> <li>○ Bonny's last OWAC</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>BIM and MSI to share the dates for upcoming screenings of Uncharted Waters</b></p>
<p>3. Photos and reports from this summer's marine debris tracking and clean-up. - Courtney and Bridget.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Successful in securing a three-month position through Ocean Wise's Ocean Bridge Direct Action program</li> <li>● In 2019 we created a marine debris layer, and so our coordinator helped to update this</li> <li>● We created a Marine Debris Reporting system that takes people to a survey to fill out. This then gets uploaded into the MRG</li> <li>● Spread the news about the Marine Debris Reporting system on our website</li> <li>● Information collected from the MDR system was used by DWV with their barge cleanup</li> <li>● At Anvil Island - 80 tires and a ton of large styrofoam blocks</li> <li>● Clean up activities at Lions Bay Beach, West Vancouver barge clean up (200 tires), Squamish, Britannia Beach and NSMEC's barge clean up on Anvil Island</li> <li>● More to come <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We will be collecting more information from Ocean Wise's shoreline clean up and will be analyzing all the data together to create a report of marine debris that's most common in the sound. This will help with best management practices. Feel free to share the marine debris form.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Submit marine debris sightings and share MSI's Marine Debris Reporting system</b></p>

	<p>Marcin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collected 200 tires, more than ever! Lots of styrofoam, propane tanks, residential waste, and old boats.</li> <li>• Difficult for people on small islands (Bowyer, Passage, Anvil) to get rid of larger items that need to be disposed of (e.g. appliances, mattresses)</li> <li>• Will be back in Howe Sound 6 years from now, the same opportunity for collaboration with local governments</li> <li>• Works with solid waste staff on properly recycling, lots of chemicals too. Lots of background sorting.</li> <li>• Metro Vancouver coordinates with staff at Transfer Stations (facilities that deal with boat disposal, Terra Pure, BC Tire Stewardship, etc). Every item is different. Not a straightforward process.</li> </ul> <p>Kate-Louise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanks for Metro offering to move outside their jurisdiction to have the barge come to Gambier to pick up</li> <li>• At a cost of \$600, styrofoam had to be removed from a beach on Gambier</li> <li>• Funding can be a challenge to take part in these cleanups as Gambier wasn't able to secure funding this year.</li> </ul> <p>Ruth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSI getting a marine debris coordinator was very useful</li> <li>• Could have a dedicated fund to build up the funds needed to support these different marine debris cleanups. Could figure out an ask moving forward.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Think about setting up a dedicated fund for marine debris</b></p>
<p>5. Urgency and planning for Howe Sound-wide Green Crab Monitoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Green Crab monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding has run out for the SSISC monitoring</li> <li>○ Need to get in front of green crab monitoring before they ruin Howe Sound</li> <li>○ Article on CBC "<a href="#">Volunteers help DFO track the spread of invasive crabs off B.C coast threatening native species</a>" - no declaration of emergency imlike the Governer of Washington state.</li> <li>○ Funding from DFO is very limited</li> <li>○ Clare has been working to get different funding</li> <li>○ What can the OWAC do to support the EGC emergency and SSISC? E.g. put together a letter for the Province so they could provide funding.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Establish task force of OWAC to lead initiative for Howe Sound wide monitoring and</b></p>



	<p>same, \$25,000 a year (\$8000 has been in kind) but \$16,000 is not a lot of money to run a volunteer program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Aroha is working to get EGC under NSMEC programs</li> <li>○ MLSS will be arranging marine life monitoring (so volunteer divers can start looking for EGC)</li> <li>○ Should be looking at the entrance of the Sound - should be a Howe Sound wide approach: Ruth will put together a small team to get a letter drafted to DFO and the Province.</li> <li>○ Biosphere has received funding from ECCC intended to focus on buffer zone areas. Looking at how the Biosphere can fit funding for buffer zone areas to work towards Canada's protection targets of 30%. Need to raise money to match this.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DFO</b></p>
<p>6. New projects and priority plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● NSMEC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Healthy Harbour Project in partnership with the Town of Gibsons. Focused on eelgrass beds, hoping to expand the project to maybe look at monitoring for EGCs</li> <li>○ Voluntary no anchor buoys in place in the harbour happened just before the summer</li> <li>○ Clean up the project with the Ocean Legacy Foundation Clean Waters Clean Coast Initiative: will share data with MSI</li> </ul> </li> <li>● MLSS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Convening a meeting of local NGOs to talk about coordinated response around lack of enforcement of rockfish. Reach out to Adam if you'd like to be a part of that.</li> <li>○ Educational outreach seminars. Reach out if you'd like a talk about GSRs, rockfish, or upcoming projects.</li> <li>○ Citizen Science Monitoring Program in Howe Sound. 10 species of rockfish are seen at scuba dive depths, 3 are listed.</li> <li>○ Seen Northern Abalone in the Sound last week! Ocean Wise dataset has only seen three since the 1997s</li> <li>○ Gambier is interested in a Zoom meeting for community members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>NSMEC to share marine debris data with MSI if able</b></p> <p><b>Reach out to MLSS if interested in the coordinated response workshop regarding rockfish enforcement</b></p> <p><b>Reach out to MLSS for an educational outreach seminar</b></p>
<p>7. Future of the Ocean Watch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Secretariat services cover some of the costs for these meetings, but not all</li> <li>● Submit any feedback on changes to the format of the</li> </ul>	<p><b>Submit any feedback on changes to the</b></p>



<p>Action Committee post-2022 municipal elections.</p>	<p>OWAC to Ruth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helpful post-election for some sort of renewed clarification of the Terms of Reference. Position it in the broader context of the region. A letter to the council and council presentations.</li> <li>• Half an hour to an hour Zoom call with candidates, start thinking of how you're going to be involved. Could do an all candidates Zoom call.</li> <li>• Social media campaign is a possibility</li> <li>• Next OWAC in December!</li> </ul>	<p><b>format of the OWAC to Ruth</b></p>
<p>8. 11:00 – 11: 30 – Informal networking and topics of interest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor DeAndrade are happy to be part of the EGC, and could talk to NSMEC about this</li> <li>• Carla will be Bonny's successor in the meantime. Carla is interested in EGC monitoring on Bowen however Carla doesn't work Fridays.</li> <li>• Need to have a coordinator for EGC, which could be shared with MSI and the Biosphere. Could contract Aroha for this.</li> </ul>	