

# Recommendation for Howe Sound Community Forum (HSCF) from Ocean Watch Action Committee

1. Background
2. Three Recommendations
3. Suggested Council Resolution

## 1. Background:

In 2017 The Coastal Ocean Research Institute (Vancouver Aquarium), produced the Ocean Watch Howe Sound Report. This comprehensive report was a culmination of collaboration and engagement supported by the HSCF. It provided a snapshot assessment of the health of the Howe Sound marine area and action items to be taken in order to improve ocean health. The Howe Sound Community Forum members supported the creation of the Ocean Watch Task Force (OWTF) with a mandate as stated in the Terms of Reference (Nov. 2017) to:

- Identify which actions in the Ocean Watch: Howe Sound Action Plan are within the mandate and reach of member communities.
- Focus on the identifying selected actions by Local Governments for implementation and highlight potential actions that include policy integration and collaboration between member Local governments and First Nations;
- Contribute information on what action local governments and Squamish Nation are already undertaking toward the goals.
- Recommend a process through which the selected actions get done
- Complete its work within six months.

Local governments appointed staff and elected representatives to participate in task force meetings. The task force met approximately every six weeks and Co-Chair Trustee Stamford reported to the HSCF in May 2018. A request to extend the term of the Task Force was supported, the Terms of Reference updated (Jan. 2019). The deliverables were a) bring forward recommendations and processes to Howe Sound Community Forum members that target selected actions for local governments to achieve and b) report at the Howe Sound Community Forums on recommendations, timelines and progress to-date on the Action Plan.

An example of supported actions by local governments was funding and leadership of the [Marine Reference Guide](#). This project is on track to complete in 2021.

Co-Chair Stamford reported on the [strategic plan](#) as part of the deliverable at the HSCF April 2019. The Task Force continued to meet regularly concluding with targeted selected actions for local governments to achieve. The final report and recommendations were presented by Co-Chair Doug Race at the HSCF October 2019 with the following recommendations:

1. A new Terms of Reference be developed by members of the Howe Sound Community Forum that defines a governance structure for a new Ocean Watch Task Force (or similar body) that provides for a more focused follow-up of the Strategic Plan actions, continues the role as Leadership Team for the Marine Reference Guide, and provides opportunities to advocate on marine issues on a regional basis;
2. This new Terms of Reference be developed in a ½ day workshop, tentatively hosted by the Town of Gibsons at a date to be determined (before the end of the year), with representation from Forum members and participating NGOs; and
3. Consideration be given to the provision of ongoing financial support to the Ocean Watch Task Force from Forum members to enable appropriate coordination of strategic actions.

In September 2020, Ocean Wise (formerly known as Vancouver Aquarium) undertook an update on action items and produced the [Howe Sound Ocean Watch 2020 Edition](#). New information and actions items will amend the Task Force strategic plan.

[The Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society](#) (HSBRIS), striving for Howe Sound to be designated a UNESCO Biosphere Region, has been an active participant in the Ocean Watch Task Force, along with David Suzuki Foundation and Ocean Wise representatives. HSBRIS convened the former members of the Ocean Watch Task Force, now the *Ocean Watch Action Committee* on October 4th. Full list of participants and copies of meeting minutes are available at [www.howesoundbri.org](http://www.howesoundbri.org).

It is acknowledged that continued collaboration, commitment and resourcing by local governments are important to fulfill the strategic plan, the completion and transition of ongoing management of the Marine Reference Guide.

## **2. Three recommendations:**

### **The HSCF Members:**

1. Support continued appointment and participation of staff and elected officials in a renewed Ocean Watch Action Committee, a working group and network of organizations dedicated to advancing governmental actions.
2. Agree to the Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society act as the host society for the network and committees.
3. Receive the Ocean Watch 2020 Edition and support the seven recommended actions.

## **3. Suggested local government resolution:**

WHEREAS continued collaboration, commitment and resourcing by governments are important to advance local, regional and national actions to support ocean marine health in the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound bioregion, be it resolved:

THAT the Ocean Wise Ocean Watch 2020 Edition and resulting Action Items be received;

AND THAT participation by *(insert gov't name)* representatives, *(title)* staff member(s) and *(insert elected representative title)* in the Ocean Watch Action Committee be supported in order to continue to advance identified recommended actions in the Ocean Wise Howe Sound Ocean Watch 2020 Edition.

AND THAT the Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society be recommended as host society for the Ocean Watch Action Committee.