



National Virtual Workshop Summary Report

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On June 23, 2020, the Canadian Ocean Literacy Coalition (COLC) held the National Virtual Workshop to discuss the [National Report](#) and the [Canadian Ocean Literacy Survey Highlights Report](#) and explore steps for moving forward. This workshop was held in conjunction with the five regional sessions of the virtual workshops (Atlantic, St. Lawrence, Pacific, Inuit Nunangat, and Inland Canada). Participants were invited to comment on the research results (Canadian OL Survey and Nanos poll; key study insights) as well as discuss the following question: *What will make this national ocean literacy (OL) strategy successful?* The highlights from these discussions are captured below.

Key insights shared during the presentation portion of the national workshop are not listed in this brief summary report, which contains only discussion points raised by participants. To read the National Report or to view the PDF of the national workshop presentation slides, please visit: <https://colcoalition.ca/upcoming-events/virtual-workshop-discussion-of-regional-and-national-reports/>

Workshop Facilitation Team

Diz Glithero (COLC), Sarah MacNeil (COLC), Noémie Roy (COLC), Barb Sweazey (Stratos), Michael van Aanhout (Stratos), Dan Adams (Stratos), Nathalie Wilson (Interpreter).

Participants

Thank you to the more than 60* participants who attended the national workshop and contributed their insights for developing a national OL strategy:

Adam Murphy (Nature Canada); Ailsa Barry (Canadian Museum of Nature); Alexa Goodman (Coastal Action); Andi White (Fisheries and Oceans Canada); Andrea van Nostrand (Johnson Geo Centre); Anna Naylor (Centre for Ocean Ventures & Entrepreneurship); Anton Holland (Niva Inc.); Bryan Martin (Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council); CarolAnne Black (CarolAnne Black, Consulting Science Writer); Chloe Gammon (St. George's Senior School); Christy Wilson (Fisheries and Oceans Canada); Claire O'Brien (Fisheries and Oceans Canada); Danika Strecko (Ocean Wise); David Pearson (Laurentian University); David Zandvliet (Simon Fraser University); Debborah Donnelly (Yukon Conservation Society); Evelyne Daigle (Biodôme de Montréal); Gauri Sreenivasan (Nature Canada); Geoff Green (Students on Ice Foundation); Grace Gong (Peel Environmental Youth Alliance); Hali Moreland (Parks Canada); Heather Mulock (Coldwater Lobster Association); Heather Murray (CaNOE); Holly Neate (CaNOE); Joanne



Glithero; Jackie Kidd (Arctic Eider Society); Jane Affleck (Artist/Researcher); Janet Stalker (Ocean School / Ocean Frontier Institute); Jennifer Putland (Ocean Networks Canada); Joe MacIsaac (Back to the Sea Society); Jonathan Kellogg (Hakai Institute); Josh Temple (Coastal Restoration Society & Clayoquot CleanUp); Kat Middleton (Fisheries and Oceans Canada); Katie McMahon (Ripley's Aquarium of Canada); Kayla Hamelin (Dalhousie University); Kiley Best (CaNOE); Kimberly Orren (Fishing for Success); Laura Avery (MEOPAR); Laura Estrada (Oceans Learning Partnership); Laura Tretheway (Laura Tretheway Projects); Lauren Hudson (Ocean Networks Canada); Lucija Prelovec (Ocean School); Maia Hoeberechts (Ocean Networks Canada); Md. Rakibul Islam (Bangladesh University of Professionals); Mel Chaar (Mitacs); Misha Warbanski (Polar Knowledge Canada); Monika Pelz (Ocean Networks Canada); Munju Ravindra (Parks Canada); Nicola Bridge (Ocean Conservation Trust); Nikki Kroetsch (Fisheries and Oceans Canada); Patrick Wells (Memorial University of Newfoundland); Paula Keener (Global Ocean Visions); Robi Smith (Artist); Sarah Pedro (Laval University); Sarah Saunders (WWF - Canada); Shannon Harding (Clean Foundation); Sjoerd van der Wielen (Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources); Susan Gesner (Gesner & Associates Environmental Learning); Tara Donaghy (Fisheries and Oceans Canada); Timothy Straka (Polar Knowledge Canada); Wendy Watson-Wright (7 Mile Bay).

*Please note that due to technical limitations, this list does not include the names of the participants who joined over the phone.

Recommendations and Pathways for a successful National OL Strategy

Below are the key points and suggestions raised by participants throughout the workshop by means of the chat as well as during the breakout portion of the workshop. The points have been summarized and organized by emergent breakout discussion themes.

OL Terminology

- Identify a more exciting and inclusive term than ‘ocean literacy’
 - A term in which everyone can see themselves, that is engaging, and that is easily understandable
 - A term which is more inclusive and relevant for Indigenous communities, francophone communities, newcomers, marginalized communities (e.g., immigrants, migrant workers, etc.), and different sectors/regions
 - The term “seascape”, which is also used within these reports in a number of places, is a good start on the idea of an ocean continuum that includes land, freshwater, ocean, and sea-ice
 - A STORY to convey the connectedness of inland and coastal waters
 - Find an existing Indigenous term that gets at the idea of this connectivity/continuum and the relationship between water, land, peoples, ocean

Collaboration and Communication

- Collaborate with local people and the government to ensure long-term buy-in
- Respect regional diversity while also promoting cross-regional collaborations towards an ethic of care, especially with the inland region
 - How do we get inland Canadians to care? Finding these means of connections can happen for example through **watersheds** and **farming** (e.g., how the ocean is impacted in very specific ways by inland activities).
- Adopt different language and approaches for different audiences
- Maintain open two-way communication via email, Zoom, etc.
 - Facilitate networking through supported French/English communication
 - Establish networks and relationships in a COVID world
- Focus on **getting people to fall in love with the ocean**
 - We often get people involved by identifying the issues and negative problems; important to have some sort of immersive ocean experience first, before people learn to protect it.
 - Look to art and literature to help foster an emotional connection to the ocean
- Develop shared messages to offer clearer direction for everybody, to speak with one voice, to make connections between location and ocean
- Enhance communication modes and messages of the importance of **OL beyond education and eNGO** sectors (e.g., politics, health, social justice, economics, industry,

insurance, tourism, recreation, etc.) and to enhance **OL communication** in citizen spaces through media, social media, storytelling, arts, etc.

- Enhance **capacity of community organizations** and initiatives
- Increase connections within, among, and outside of communities (particularly Indigenous and remote communities)
- Support and promote accessible **knowledge and science communication** tools
- Share **research data** openly, transparently, through accessible platforms (e.g., OCAP for Indigenous knowledge governance)

Accessibility and Inclusion

- Address the barriers posed by the term “ocean literacy,” accessibility of resources, and even the (in)accessibility of the ocean across the country
- Existing opportunities (e.g., ocean science camps) may only be accessible to youth of certain socioeconomic backgrounds
 - Ensure inclusive space and support for diverse youth, including rural, and that are offered in multiple languages
- Part of the inclusiveness of the ocean is to talk about ocean-health connections

Indigenous Engagement and Leadership

- Nation-to-Nation work with First Nations is key to implementing national strategies
 - How do we engage First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in the development of strategies, particularly national strategies?
 - What national bodies exist that oversee this sort of process, and how to approach them?
- What approaches can be used to include Indigenous people in the development of the national OL strategy?
 - Learn from Indigenous self-governance approaches in the Arctic, Indigenous-academic co-developed research in the Pacific, and the Two-Eyed Seeing approach in the Atlantic

Media

- Given that the majority of Canadians learn about the ocean through media (a striking finding for the breakout participants based on presentation of results from the Canadian OL Survey and Nanos poll):
 - Can the strategy be devised in a way that encourages collaboration with media (e.g., potential to make immersive social media experiences, to connect with youth and tech about the ocean)?
 - Can the strategy help work together with organizations already advanced in this area?
 - Use media and social media to get the strategy into the hands of people who are not already ocean-engaged

Youth

- Engagement of youth is critical
 - Potentially establish youth councils for each region, that among other things can work on social media (akin to Vote Future Majority) and raise awareness among politicians
 - Leverage existing youth networks such as Ocean Bridge and Students on Ice
 - Educating youth is often the best way to educate adults as well, as youth will come home and talk about what they learn (and often guilt their parents into changing harmful behaviours such as not recycling or purchasing excessive single use plastics)

Education

- Schools are the best vehicle to increase ocean understanding, values, and action, However, governance of school curriculums is complex, especially in the relationship between Canada and provinces.
 - Potentially build ocean education toolkits to be used and adapted across Canada as part of the strategy implementation phase
 - Define in the strategy what we want all Canadians to know about the ocean and how it is to be implemented and used at the classroom level
 - We need to define what that level of understanding is – not just core ocean science, but core ecological and other knowledge
 - Focus on teacher training and designing professional development opportunities
 - Develop list of local facilitators to help bring messaging to classrooms
 - Start educating children through elementary and middle school – waiting until high school is too late
 - Work provincially with national support to mandate ocean-climate education
- Continued and adult education is also important in fostering an ethic of care for the ocean
 - Identify easy and alternative ways of educating people about the ocean (e.g. BC ferries, educating when people are on the ferry)
 - Use opportunities and innovation (e.g. recent humpback whale sighting in Montreal harbour) as an opportunity for people to feel connected to the ocean

Industry Engagement

- Explore strategic and ethical relationships with **industry** to
 - a) educate industry on OL concepts, and
 - b) examine potential funding and partnership opportunities
- Focus on innovative job creation around ocean stewardship
- Enforce environmental regulations with fee structures to fund community groups doing restoration or education work
 - Example: Every time someone buys a waterfowl hunting license, they also must buy a Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp. That \$ goes to Wildlife Habitat Canada, which then provides grants to organizations who do wildlife habitat conservation work



- Example: requirement for companies/ developers/ industries/ etc. to fund community groups/ not-for-profits that focus on OL in the regions that they are working in, especially when they apply for things such as variances
- Clearly articulate the return on investment for businesses to support OL work
- Leverage strategy to ensure that “bluewashing” doesn't happen, i.e. that industries are accountable and doing something concrete through policies, protocols, etc. to ensure that they're participating in helpful, sustainable ways
 - e.g., develop requirements or benchmarks; require quantitative participation from industry partners
- Targeted engagement (e.g., shipping/ transportation) of industries that are reliant on marine resource, but have little internal knowledge about the issues or funding required for rehabilitation or remediation work

Governance and Policy

- Articulate ownership and identify champions
 - With competing jurisdictions at various levels of government, the strategy needs ownership and champions to be successful and move policy conversations forward, all while maintaining local and regional strengths (i.e. keep bottom-up perspective)
- Break down/apply the strategy further to speak to different sectors, such as action-oriented organizations, teachers, and industry
- Leverage strategy to educate policy and decision-makers
 - Not many decision-makers are knowledgeable about the ocean unless they hold/manage an ocean/water portfolio
 - Host special workshops for government people
- Ensure political visibility and uptake of this strategy

Strategy Elements

- The national strategy needs to have a strong regional focus and include Indigenous perspectives
- The strategy supports the regions and the regions recognize the benefits of coordination at a national level / national hub to:
 - Support and secure more investment in OL work by soliciting government and industry to help fill the funding gaps
 - Address the competition for funding that currently prohibits regions from effectively sharing resources by setting up incentives to collaborate in receiving funding and thus encourage stronger, more collaborative projects
 - Create a national OL community of practice to open up opportunities such as ocean lessons, shared best practices, data sharing, and monthly/regular check-ins with different organizations to keep up-to-date and aware of the amazing work happening across the country
 - Foster more coordinated and collaborative action by strengthening OL networks regionally and coordinating regional networks nationally
 - Monitor progress and impact as a coordinated national community

- Align with international frameworks (i.e., SDGs, UN Decade, IMPAC5, etc.) and advance Canada as a global OL leader

Strategy Layout

- Design the strategy to begin with commonly shared/agreed-upon guiding principles and move towards a set of national recommendations and actions followed by 5 sets of regional recommendations and actions
- Include recommendations and actions specific to key identified cross-cutting groups or themes, including a) youth, b) Indigenous Peoples, c) industry, d) education, e) Francophonie, and f) Media/Communications
- Ensure the strategy is flexible to allow for regional adaptation and local interpretation, recognizing that the implementation will look different in different areas
- Frame the strategy to:
 - Showcase the three dimensions of OL that were used in COLC's study: knowledge, values, and actions
 - Provide a rich opportunity for settler Canadians to learn from and about what First Nations, Metis, and Inuit have always known (e.g., for southern Canadians to learn from Inuit)
 - Demonstrate a watershed approach that shares coastal communities' local, place-based knowledge with inland Canadians
 - Be relevant to those not already ocean-engaged (requires strategic thought)
- The strategy should include:
 - Concrete actions - specific things that people at all levels and in all sectors can do, both at the individual level and at different levels of government
 - Clear instructions on how to implement the strategy
 - Case studies / stories of success as part of the strategy

Measuring and Monitoring

- Determine means of measuring ocean knowledge, values, and actions, and determine means of monitoring ongoing progress and impact of these dimensions
- Establish plan for revisions to the strategy in 1, 2, or 3 years to revise it based on reality
- Determine a process for reflection, evaluation, and ongoing revisions

