



St. Lawrence Regional Virtual Workshop

Summary Report

Lead: Sarah MacNeil, St. Lawrence Regional Coordinator

On June 22, 2020, the Canadian Ocean Literacy Coalition (COLC) held the St. Lawrence Virtual Workshop to review and discuss the [St. Lawrence Regional Report](#) and explore steps for moving forward. This workshop was part of the five regional sessions of the virtual workshops (Atlantic, St. Lawrence, Pacific, Inuit Nunangat, Inland Canada) and one national session. Participants were invited to comment on the research results (strengths, barriers, and preliminary recommendations) and discuss the following question: *How can a national strategy help advance ocean literacy (OL) in the St. Lawrence region?* The highlights from these discussions are captured below.

Workshop Facilitation Team

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

Participants

Thank you to the 29* participants who attended the workshop and contributed their insights for developing a national ocean literacy strategy.

CarolAnne Black (CarolAnne Black, Consulting Science Writer); Dany Dumont (Quebec Maritime Network); David Pearson (Laurentian University); David Zandvliet (Simon Fraser University); Dominique Robert (Institut France-Québec Maritime); Ève Morin Desrosiers (St. Lawrence Global Observatory); Evelyne Daigle (Montreal Biodôme); Exploramer; Geneviève Dupéré (écH2osystème); Geneviève Lalonde (Quebec Maritime Network); Hali Moreland (Parks Canada); Janet Stalker (Ocean School/Ocean Frontier Institute); Jolyne Hebert (Shediac Bay Watershed Association); Kayla Hamelin (Dalhousie University); Kiley Best (CaNOE); Lucija Prelovec (Ocean School/CaNOE); Maia Hoeberechts (Ocean Networks Canada); Marie-Philippe Ouellet (Parks Canada/Nature For All); Mark Mattson (Swim Drink Fish); Mélanie Lemire (Laval University); Nicola Bridge (Ocean Conservation Trust); Patrick Wells (Memorial University of Newfoundland); Saiqa Azam (Memorial University of Newfoundland); Sarah Board (CaNOE); Sarah Granier (Institut France-Québec Maritime); Sarah Saunders (WWF - Canada); Tara Donaghy (Fisheries and Oceans Canada); Tara Mascarenhas (Students on Ice Foundation); Vidya Balasubramanyam (Illinois Coastal Management Program).

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



Part 1: Review of the St. Lawrence Regional Report

Regional Strengths

The following strengths were identified in the report: Coordinated consultation and dialogue; Dynamic and accessible knowledge communication; Multidisciplinary research networks; and Intersectoral collaborations and partnerships.

No additional regional strengths were identified.

Regional Barriers

The following barriers were identified in the report: Insufficient, short-term, and competitive funding; Disconnection from the region’s waters; Access to the water and its resources; and Language constraints.

One additional barrier was identified by participants:

- The jurisdictional complexity that characterizes the region

Regional Recommendations

Participants were invited to poll on the preliminary recommendations identified in the regional report to gauge which recommendations resonated the most. The results of the informal poll are indicated in Table 1.

Integrate knowledge & perspectives of First Nations and non-Indigenous coastal communities into the co-production of OL	69%
Support and promote accessible knowledge and science communication tools	46%
Provide sustained funding for OL	42%
Create collaborative tools and spaces for OL practice across borders	27%

Table 1: St. Lawrence preliminary recommendations polling results

Two additional recommendations were identified by participants:

- Include youth in the co-production of OL knowledge and in decision-making processes
- Include communities' food security and health issues in OL initiatives and research

Additionally, there was a suggestion to broaden to include other important facets of OL (e.g., socio-economic and cultural factors) in the scope of ‘science communication tools.’

Part 2: Building a National Strategy: St. Lawrence Insights

Throughout the workshop, participants identified the need to maintain the diversity of regional voices, perspectives, and practices within the national strategy. Below is a summary of the breakout group discussions, which were centered on ensuring a successful national strategy in the St. Lawrence region and an effective national strategy overall.

1. Towards a Successful National Strategy in the St. Lawrence Region

- Showcase the importance of the St. Lawrence in linking freshwater and saltwater ecosystems and in the continuum between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean
- Emphasize the versatility of the St. Lawrence, including its recreational and aesthetic value, its function as a seaway and economic hub, and its importance to community health and food security
- Lean on the St. Lawrence's industry expertise to model potential industry engagement across the country
- Recognize the prevalence of urban centres along the waterway and formulate different approaches for OL in urban and rural communities
 - Recognize the many forms of the St. Lawrence (river, estuary, gulf) in approaching OL in the region, and understand this might affect/influence community knowledge and actions
- Amplify efforts to create inclusive OL language and terminology
 - Develop more adequate OL terminology in French
 - Ensure resource allocation for material and program translation
 - Model efforts to create an inclusive space for OL in French to apply to Indigenous languages

2. Towards an Effective National Strategy Overall

- Allow the strategy to be fluid, to change and evolve across borders/regions
- Co-develop the strategy with Traditional Knowledge holders
- Generate clear *calls to action* for key sectors
- Focus on enhancing social participation and engagement rather than behavioural change
- Ensure regional accountability
 - Provide specific measurable objectives (for all regions and nationally)
 - Include touchstones to match regional progress with strategy
- Highlight freshwater and ocean connection to broaden reach and engagement
 - Frame the ocean/water to be locally relevant
- Increase interregional and intercultural learning and collaboration
 - Offer opportunities for diverse organizations to meet and collaborate (including with American colleagues)
 - Create opportunities to dialogue and collaborate with Indigenous peoples



- Recognize youth as integral players in OL
 - Involve youth and children in decision-making processes
 - Involve youth and children in dialogues and exchanges
- Emphasize continuous and integrated education across disciplines
 - Include OL in K - 12 curriculum
 - Bridge the gap between school and academia
 - Create opportunities for intergenerational learning
 - Go beyond sciences to include arts, social sciences, and health-based knowledges
 - Include Indigenous, local, and place-based knowledges in all OL initiatives and research
 - Increase awareness of marine and freshwater issues among decision-makers
 - Increase accessibility of ‘maritimité’ (culture, values, ethics relating to the ocean)

