

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF  
FISHERIES AND OCEANS OF CANADA AND THE DEPARTMENT FOR  
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF  
GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND ON ENHANCING BILATERAL CO-  
OPERATION ON GLOBAL FISHERIES AND MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL  
GOVERNANCE**

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans of Canada (DFO) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK), hereinafter referred to as the "Participants",

**Recognising** the importance of ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable use of marine resources and the inter-linked threats that climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution pose to ocean ecosystems, their services and the benefits derived from them;

**Noting** that Canada and the UK are both Parties to the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* (UNCLOS), the *Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and the Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks*, done at New York on 4 December 1995, and the *Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, done at New York on 28 July 1994;

**Recognising** their former and existing co-operation in the areas of fisheries, marine protected areas and other effective area-based marine conservation measures, ocean governance, and the development of the draft regulations for exploitation of deep seabed minerals issued by the International Seabed Authority within the general legal framework established by UNCLOS;

**Recognising** that Canada and the UK are members of the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy and have set a goal to achieve 100 per cent sustainable ocean management of areas within national jurisdiction, guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans;

**Noting** that Canada and the UK are Parties to the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD), done at New York on 5 June 1992, and recognising the former co-operation on development of ambitious global biodiversity targets under the CBD, including the development and adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF);

**Desiring** to increase their co-operation and information exchanges to support application of the GBF, including through the UK-chaired Global Ocean Alliance;

**Considering** that in 2018, at the G7 Leaders Summit, Canada and the UK endorsed the Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities and the Ocean Plastics Charter;

**Reaffirming** the close ties between Canada and the UK and their shared values and approaches in regional and multilateral fora, including relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organisations;

**Noting** the inter-relationship between the sustainable management of all living marine resources and biological research, technical and technological knowledge, Indigenous

knowledge and participation, and other relevant standards and their importance for the production, marketing and processing of living marine resources;

**With a view to** strengthening, promoting and further developing their co-operation, their discussions and their exchanges of information to enhance the governance, conservation and sustainable use of the ocean, and marine resources, particularly in the North Atlantic Ocean which supports diverse industries and communities along both nations' coasts and is a significant global carbon sink; and in light of the recently adopted GBF and the *Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction* (BBNJ Agreement), done at New York on 20 September 2023;

**Recognising** the importance of ensuring the sustainable development of their marine and maritime sectors, including through further development of marine knowledge and environment-friendly innovation for the competitiveness and social attractiveness of the economies of Canada and the UK;

**Recognising** the importance of co-operation to address climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, as well as other adverse impacts of human activities on the ocean and on marine life;

**Recognising** the existing level of scientific co-operation between Canada and the UK, including within the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas as member countries and the All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance, and their desire to increase scientific co-operation and scientific exchanges in areas of common interest;

**Recognising** the existing co-operation and sharing of intelligence between Canada and the UK in formulating best practices to tackle illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including through the IUU Fishing Action Alliance Pledge;

**Have reached** the following understanding:

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish a framework for the Participants to promote their co-operation and facilitate contact between Canada and the UK on any matter related to fisheries and the marine environment, within the respective areas of competence of DEFRA and DFO including common challenges in the North Atlantic Ocean.

## **2. UK-Canada Fisheries and Marine Environment Dialogue**

(a) The Participants will establish a Fisheries and Marine Environment Dialogue (FMED) to facilitate the operation of this MOU.

(b) The Participants understand that:

(i) the FMED will consist of formal meetings, which are expected to take place not less than annually, and other *ad hoc* meetings and communications between them.

(ii) the formal meetings may, *inter alia*, assess the progress of the activities they jointly decide upon as part of the FMED and prioritise activities, as appropriate.

- (c) The Participants may discuss and decide upon the location of the meetings and the organisational form and working procedures at the first meeting, with a view to rotating the meetings annually between Canada and the UK.
- (d) At the annual FMED, the Participants may raise and discuss any bilateral or multilateral issue of relevance to the marine and fisheries sector.
- (e) Where either Participant wishes to raise and discuss other issues that fall outside of the scope of the FMED they may do so by contacting the relevant Ministry or Ministries,.

### **3. Development of Technical and Scientific Co-operation**

The Participants understand that their shared interest in promoting, the development of technical and scientific co-operation related to fisheries and marine environmental issues may include issues relating to ecosystem-based ocean management and emerging environmental challenges in the North Atlantic Ocean, for example, the collection of marine genetic resources for research and development purposes, and the exchange of scientific expertise and the coordination of research campaigns and ocean observing, particularly in the North Atlantic.

### **4. Status**

This MOU is not legally binding.

### **5. Final Dispositions**

- (a) This MOU will take effect on the date upon which it has been signed by both Participants.
- (b) The Participants may modify this MOU at any time upon their mutual written consent.
- (c) Either Participant may terminate this MOU by giving three months' written notice to the other Participant. The termination will be effective from the date of reception of the notice by the other Participant.

**Signed** in duplicate at Nice, on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of June 2025, in the English and French languages, each version being equally valid.

*For the Department of Environment,  
Food and Rural Affairs of the  
United Kingdom of Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland:*

*For the Department of  
Fisheries and Oceans of Canada:*

