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Tidings: Stories from Canada's Oceans Protection Plan

Oceans Protection Plan: Another year around the sun!

On November 8, we marked the eight-year anniversary of the Oceans Protection Plan (OPP). Since last November, this multi-departmental Government of Canada initiative - the largest investment Canada has made to keep our coasts and waterways clean - has continued to make significant strides in safeguarding our oceans, enhancing marine safety, and building resilient partnerships with Indigenous and coastal communities.

Collaboration is important for OPP, guiding decisions, shaping programs, and directing funding. Our employees are at the heart of these efforts, forging and nurturing the relationships that keep OPP moving forward. Carrying out missions specific to each region, they are ready to respond at a moment's notice, like a last-minute announcement, partner engagement, or a dialogue forum - just to name a few - our skilled and adaptable colleagues are quite literally the "boots on the ground" behind OPP.

What OPP has accomplished this year has no doubt been propelled by the OPP teams in the Pacific, Arctic, Quebec, Ontario and Atlantic regions.

Here is a list of just some of the work we are so incredibly proud of over this last year:

- Created new regulations to improve safety and prevent pollution from ships in the Arctic, where conditions are unique for vessels.
- Built new radar sites to better track and monitor marine traffic along the coasts.
- Provided more funding for projects that restore and protect coastal and aquatic habitats.
- Made abandoning boats illegal and removed or assessed over 700 abandoned or wrecked vessels from Canadian waters.
- Trained fishery officers to respond to incidents involving marine mammals and provided them with equipment for better response.

- Trained emergency response teams to respond more quickly and effectively to marine accidents.
- Supported hundreds of students through the Marine Training Program, helping underrepresented groups, including Inuit, First Nations, Métis, women, and Northerners, gain skills in and join the marine industry.
- Funded Indigenous coastal communities to purchase search and rescue boats and equipment to improve marine safety.
- Helped expand the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary in the Arctic by providing funding for 23 communities to buy boats and equipment to improve local response.
- Increased patrol hours for the National Aerial Surveillance Program to better monitor and report marine pollution in northern waters.
- Funded a study to examine the impact of microplastics in the Arctic Ocean and their effects on marine life.

Dive in and join us as we navigate through these exciting stories and more. And if you have any questions about this issue, or want to see your OPP story covered in a future edition, please feel free to always email Tidings editor [Joanna Tymkiw](#).



Revamping sealift operations: A critical lifeline for Kinngait and the Arctic

Imagine living in a place where the arrival of one or two ships can define how you live for the next year. For the 1,400 residents of Kinngait, Nunavut, this is reality.

[Continue reading about sealift operations](#)



Protecting our waters: How ESTS equips responders for hazardous spill emergencies

Responding to hazardous spills is challenging and requires specialized skills. The Emergencies Science and Technology Section (ESTS) of Environment and Climate Change Canada supports responders 24/7 with expert guidance, dedicated lab analysis, and advanced scientific techniques. Through the Oceans Protection Plan, ESTS also offers essential training, like the HAZWOPER (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response) course, to prepare responders with the skills and equipment they need to handle spills safely.

[Learn more about ESTS's vital work in hazardous spill response](#)



We need your feedback: Increasing access to marine emergency services and improving response to pollution incidents

Transport Canada is developing new regulations to increase vessel access to marine emergency services and improve response to pollution incidents, following updates to the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001* made in 2023. The proposed changes may require some vessels to have agreements for emergency services, describe response plan rules for hazardous and noxious substances, and introduce a response coordinator role for vessel pollution response plans.

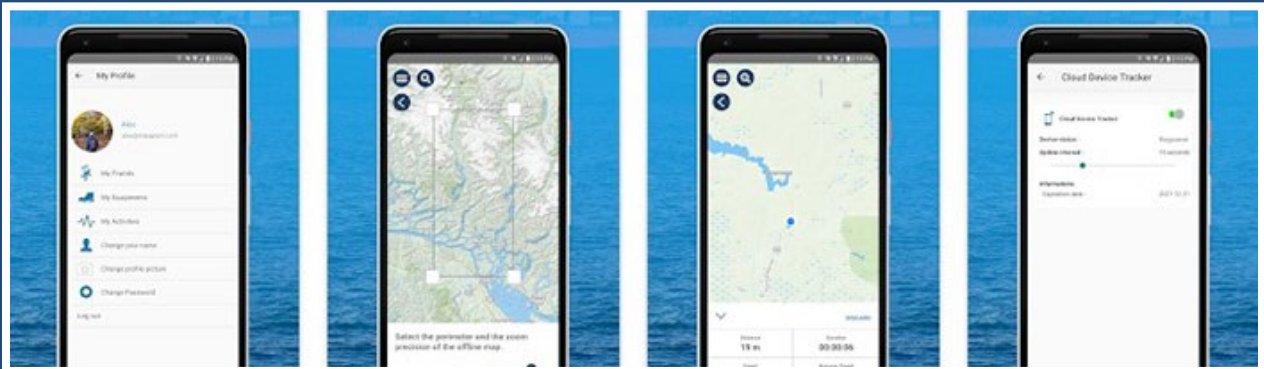
A [discussion paper about our initial intentions](#) is available online. Feedback is open until **January 31, 2025**. To share your views or ask questions, contact: OPP.EMEM.HNS-PPO.AGUM.SNPD@tc.gc.ca.



First Nations Fisheries Council offers a vital bridge for collaboration

Collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and coastal communities is a core principle of the Oceans Protection Plan, with the First Nations Fisheries Council (FNFC) playing a key role in partnering with Transport Canada to ensure Indigenous voices are central.

- [Continue reading about the FNFC](#)
- [Watch the video](#)



EMSA updates: App improvements were front and center at this year's annual governance meeting

Key highlights from the past year include four major EMSA system updates with new features and improvements.

[Continue reading about EMSA](#)