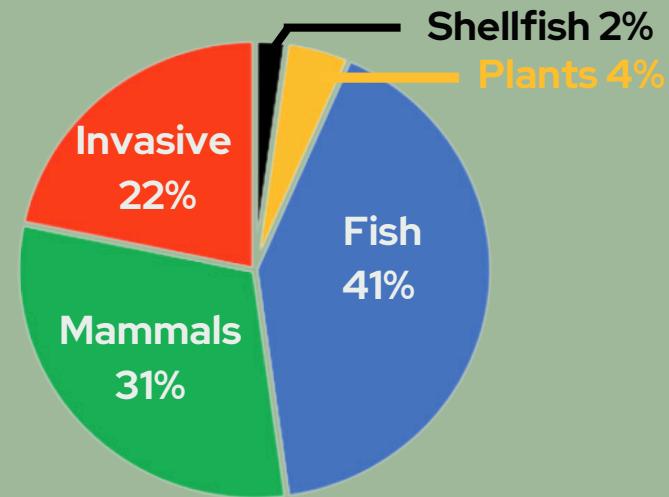


What We Heard

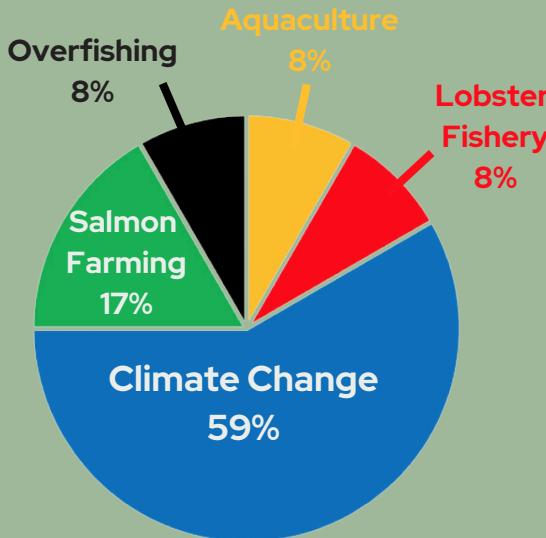
This project gathered community feedback through surveys and interviews to understand local ecological concerns and community values for marine environments in communities from Conne River to the Burin Peninsula. This information will be used to develop a set of well-informed, community-supported conservation strategies to present to decision-makers for further planning. The following summarizes data gathered from our initial round of feedback.

Species Concerns

Local residents expressed concerns about the health and sustainability of key species in the area. These concerns include observed declines in eelgrass, salmon, smelt, catfish, dogfish, lumpfish, beelfish, haddock, porbeagle and blue sharks; while native crabs, lobster, scallop, cod, halibut, sunfish, pilot whales, seals, otters, seaturtles, green crab and tunicate populations increased. Overall, the survey identified fish as the leading concern, followed by mammals, then invasive species, plants and shellfish. **Invasive green crab** was mentioned in several surveys as well as **rising seal populations**. Respondents identified 10 species under Schedule 1 of the Species At Risk Act, with Atlantic salmon being the only species decreasing in populations while other species were observed to be increasing over the years.



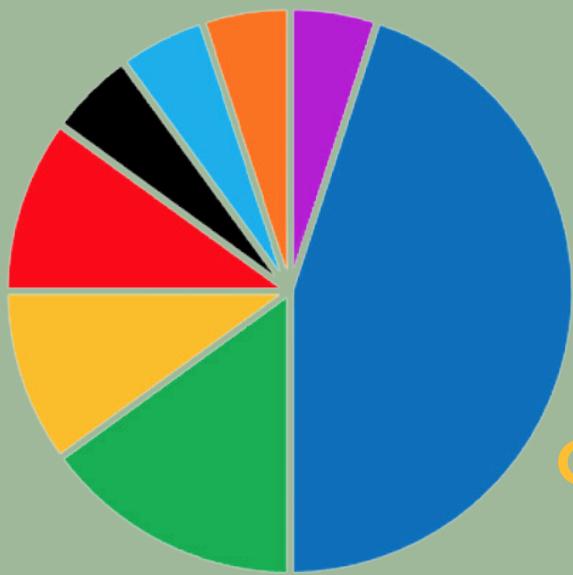
Environmental and Industrial Concerns



Feedback highlighted the delicate balance between environmental preservation and industry activity. Community members emphasized the need to address the fishing industry, and climate-related challenges while considering the economic importance of local industries. **Climate change** is the foremost concern of local residents, mainly concerning species migrating to different areas due to warming waters and shifts in the presence and timing of species in the area. **Salmon farming** was also mentioned in several surveys, as it is a rapidly expanding industry with potential negative impacts on local wild populations. Several factors surrounding the **fishing industry** arose, including overfishing and highly invasive fishing techniques. The health of fish communities was highly prioritized by community members, as they serve as a vital source of both food and income.

What We Heard

Community Proposed Solutions



Community Education and Outreach 45%

Green Crab Removal Programs 15%

School Visits 10%

Organized Cleanup Efforts 10%

Less Invasive Fishing Methods 5%

Research 5%

Alternate Fisheries 5%

Eelgrass Planning 5%

In southern Newfoundland, community members have proposed various solutions to address conservation challenges, with a strong emphasis on community education and outreach as the top priority. Many believe that fostering awareness and engagement is essential for long-term environmental stewardship. Other suggested actions include green crab removal programs, eelgrass planting to restore vital habitats, and school visits to instill a conservation ethic in younger generations. Organized cleanup efforts, research initiatives, and adopting less invasive fishing methods were also highlighted, alongside alternating fisheries to reduce pressure on local marine populations. These community-driven solutions reflect a collective commitment to safeguarding the region's ecosystems.

**To Request an interview, or to discuss,
 Email: skarabatsos@cpaws.org**