

**Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Teleconference on the Howe Sound Glass Sponge Reefs  
Stakeholders Meeting, January 17, 2019.**

Present: MLSS Directors - Sheila Byers, Adam Taylor, Glen Dennison

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During the DFO teleconference meeting, some 20+ stakeholders across different industries and environmental agencies had the opportunity to review a summary of the stakeholder recommendations and feedback from the July 26, 2018 workshop that discussed the prospective Fisheries closures for Howe Sound sponge reefs.

With a presentation of the revised January 2019 prospective closures, DFO then accepted additional comments from stakeholders during the teleconference meeting. Input was gathered from the commercial fishing sectors, sport fishing sectors, and the environment coalition.

During the meeting, a question was raised about the accuracy of the DFO location charts. Director Sheila Byers confirmed that MLSS had created the original high-resolution scientific data and charts of the Howe Sound sponge reefs and that these are available for viewing and downloading on the MLSS website.

Furthermore, MLSS noted the need for DFO enforcement of the proposed Fisheries closures in Howe Sound as being an important component to protect not only the glass sponge reefs but all marine life within the Sound. MLSS emphasized the importance of education being a critical aspect of raising awareness regarding the proposed closures for all stakeholders and visitors to the Howe Sound area.

DFO invited further input from stakeholders no later than February 11, 2019. DFO indicated they would submit the Fisheries closure proposal and recommendations to the Fisheries Minister in March 2019.