



Notice to Fish Harvesters

2025 - SOUTHERN GULF OF ST-LAWRENCE LOBSTER CONSERVATION HARVESTING PLAN FOR LOBSTER FISHING AREAS (LFAs) 23, 24, 26A AND 26B

Moncton, NB – March 17, 2025 – Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Gulf Region, announces the 2025 management measures for Lobster Fishing Areas (LFA) 23, 24, 26A and 26B. Unless indicated otherwise, existing management measures remain in place. Please refer to your lobster licence conditions for further details. Licence conditions should be available on the National Online Licensing System by March 30, 2025.

Management measures and the season dates for **LFA 25** will be announced at a later date.

Opening Dates in 2025

Please see the 2025 targeted season dates below:

Lobster Fishing Area	Season opening dates in 2025
23	April 30 - June 30
24	April 25 - June 25
26A 1	April 25 - June 25
26A-2	April 26 - June 26
26A-3	April 22 - June 22
26 B (South)	April 30 - June 30
26 B (North)	May 2 - July 2

The LFA season will open at 6 AM on the dates indicated in the table above. Season dates are subject to change due to weather, ice, dredging activities or other conditions. In the event of inclement weather, in accordance with departmental directives, the season opening may be delayed, with a corresponding extension of up to four days (one day for one day up to four days), at the industry's request. In LFA 23, there is also flexibility allowing for an opening up to 72 hours prior to the scheduled season opening.

DFO will monitor and assess the situation at the various wharves a few weeks before the scheduled openings. Conference calls will be held in the days leading up to the scheduled opening between DFO and stakeholders to obtain feedback on the situation at various locations in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Electronic Logbook (NEW)

As announced on October 17, 2024, the use of an electronic logbook (ELOG) will be mandatory in 2025. This requirement applies to all commercial and commercial communal harvesters fishing lobster in Lobster Fishing Areas 23, 24, 25 and 26. The use of paper logbooks will no longer be accepted.

Harvesters must download and use an ELOG application approved by Fisheries and Oceans Canada : [Qualified electronic logbooks \(ELOG\) client applications](#).

More information on ELOGs is available at the following links:

- [Electronic logbooks \(ELOGS\)](#)
- [Mandatory Electronic Logbooks \(ELOGs\) in 2025 for the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Snow Crab and Lobster Fisheries](#)

For any additional questions regarding the National ELOG program, please contact DFO at 1-877-535-7307 or at the following email: fishing-peche@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

Experimental pilot project - retention of striped bass bycatch in lobster fisheries

Please note that the small-scale experimental pilot project from last year, allowing striped bass bycatch retention in LFA 25's lobster fishery, will be extended to LFAs 23, 24, 26A, and 26B in 2025. This will enable the department to collect a wider range of data on the prevalence, distribution, condition and composition of striped bass in the lobster fisheries. DFO will work in collaboration with associations and interested Indigenous groups on the implementation of this pilot project.

LFA 23D - Change in the minimum legal carapace size and dockside monitoring (NEW)

Starting in 2025, the minimum legal carapace size will be reduced from 81 mm to 79 mm in LFA 23D only. This temporary measure will be maintained for a period of three years. In addition, a pilot project will be implemented to monitor a portion of all lobster landings and will be subject to dockside monitoring. Details will be published in another notice to fishers.

Management measures to minimize interactions with North Atlantic Right Whales

Please note that the 2025 management measures for the protection of the North Atlantic Right Whale will be communicated at a later date. A notice will be sent to industry members once these have been announced.

Table 1: Key Management Measures in 2025 in Lobster Fishing Areas 23, 24, 26A and 26B

Lobster Fishing Area	Minimum legal carapace size (mm)¹	Window size females (mm)²	Maximum number of traps	Minimum number of traps per line³	Maximum hoop size (mm)	Escape Mechanism Size (mm)
23A	81	115-129	300	n/a	152	47 x 127 or 46 x 254
23B	81	115-129	300	n/a	152	47 x 127 or 46 x 254
23C	81	115-129	300	In a portion of 23C: 3 traps	152	47 x 127 or 46 x 254

23D	79*	115-129	300	In a portion of 23D: 3 traps	152	44 x 127 or 43 x 254
24	75	115-129	300	6 traps	n/a	43 x 127 or 42 x 254
26A-1	76	115-129	272 PEI 280 Gulf NS	In a portion of 26A-1 adjacent to PEI: 6 traps 26A-1 (Gulf NS fishers only): 5 traps	n/a	43 x 127 or 42 x 254
26A-2	78	115-129	255 and 275 ⁴	6 traps	152	44 x 127 or 43 x 254
26A-3	81	115-129	250	2 traps	n/a	47 x 127 or 46 x 254
26B South	82.5	n/a	250	n/a	n/a	47 x 127 or 47 x 254
26B North ⁵	83.5	n/a	250	5 traps	152	48 x 127 or 48 x 254

Notes:

¹As defined by licence conditions (female Lobster of a length of 115 mm but not more than 129 mm shall be returned to the water immediately in a manner that causes it the least harm).

²As defined by licence conditions.

³Commercial licence holders: 255 traps/Some Communal Commercial licence holders: 275 traps.

⁴Closure to fishing of Cheticamp Harbour.

*Temporary measure with a return to 81 mm after a 3-year period, in 2028.

LFA 26B North

The multi-year management plan as announced in 2024 will continue as follows:

Year	Management Measure
2026	Minimum carapace size increase to 84 mm Maximum hoop size of 152 mm is removed as a restriction in the Conditions of Licence

Bait

Since 2024, the minimum carapace size of rock crab that is permitted to be used as bait in LFA 26 A (including A1, A2, and A3) is **108 mm**.

Restrictions on the reissuance of lobster licenses

For information on restriction on the movement of lobster licences, please refer to the Commercial Fisheries Licensing Policy for Gulf Region that can be found at the following link: <http://www.glf.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Gulf/Licenses-Delivery/Commercial-Fisheries-Licensing-Policy>.

Daily closed time

The daily close time is from 9:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. in LFA 23.

Transit Corridors

The transit corridors remain in effect, and a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required (every 5 minutes) if using the transit corridor. The corridor allows fish harvesters to transport their catches through that area to reach their homeport avoiding the use of the smack boat. For this reason, a validity period is added to LFA 23D licences conditions from the date of issuance to June 30. The opening and closing of the season will remain as indicated in the Fisheries Regulations or as announced in a Variation Order. The coordinates for the corridor are identified in the Variation Order and the licence conditions of those using the corridor.

Before you go fishing

The Department has assembled a list of requirements and documents harvesters will need before they start fishing. This list is available at: [Before you start fishing, you will need... \(dfo-mpo.gc.ca\)](http://dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Rachel Friolet
Resource Management, **Eastern NB**
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Tracadie, NB
506-395-7705

Ben Moore
Resource Management, **PEI**
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Charlottetown, PEI
902-315-0284

Alan Dwyer
Resource Management, **Gulf NS**
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Antigonish, NS
902-318-1460

Mathieu Vienneau
Resource Management, **Gulf Region**
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Moncton, NB
506-875-5283