



**Fisheries and Aquaculture
Minister**

PO Box 2223, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 3C4 • Telephone 902 424-8953 Fax 902 428-3145 • novascotia.ca

February 20, 2018

Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment
P.O. Box 8013 Dep
N-0030 Oslo
Norway

Dear Minister Elvestuen:

Re: Response to “Proposal for amendments to the Regulations relating to alien organisms”

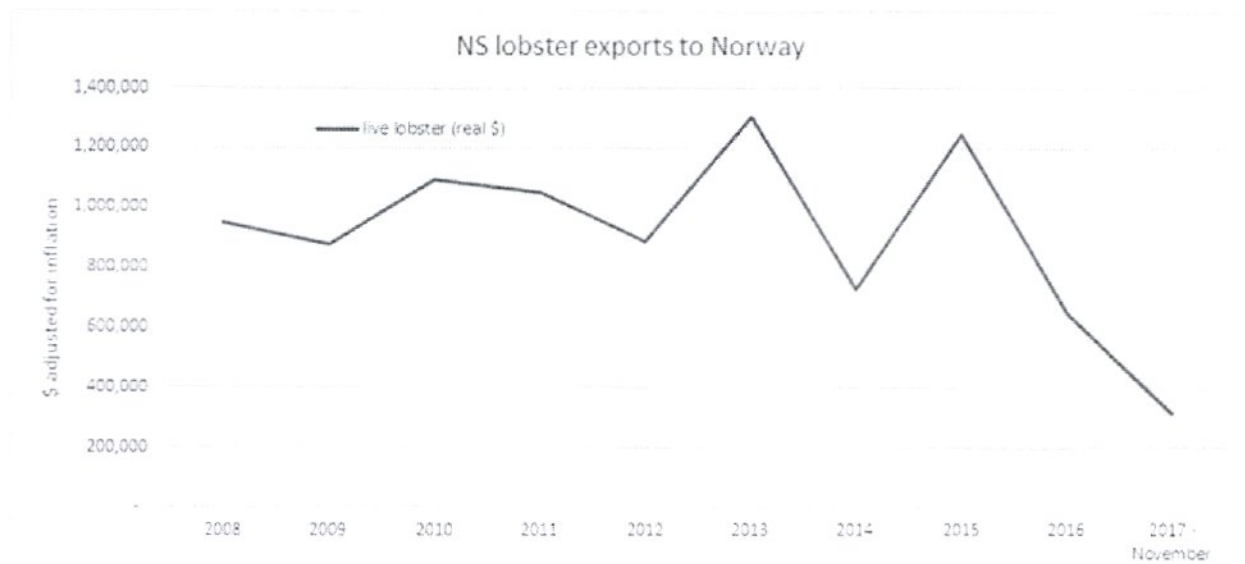
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Norway Ministry of Climate and Environment’s Consultation Paper – *Proposal for Amendments to the Regulations Relating to Alien Organisms (October 27, 2017)*. The following perspective is submitted on behalf of the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (Canada).

Nova Scotia’s comments relate to the Norwegian Regulations relating to alien organisms / live *Homarus americanus* (American lobster) importation, which were enacted pursuant to the *Nature Diversity Act* and came into force on January 1, 2016.

Nova Scotia supports the Government of Canada and the Canadian lobster industry position that countries importing live lobster should make decisions based on sound science. Nova Scotia is in alignment with Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s critique of the science underpinning these regulations and the perceived levels of risk.

NS would like to remind that as member of the WTO and a partner country under EFTA, Norway has obligations under both of these agreements.

Any live lobster import restrictions in European markets is a serious concern for Nova Scotian traders. Since the regulations came into force, there has been a significant drop in live lobster exports to Norway from Nova Scotia. When adjusted for inflation, compared to the previous 10-year average (2008 to 2017 YTD), live lobster exports from NS to Norway fell 29% (\$CAD 261,000) in 2016 and 65% (\$CAD 595,000) in 2017, as of the end of November 2017.



Source: CATSNET (AAFC) and Statistics Canada

In addition, there is real concern that adoption of the Norwegian approach to Canadian live lobster imports by other European/EU countries could cause significant harm to the Nova Scotia lobster industry. NS lobster exports to the European Union have averaged \$CAD 80 million over the past five years, \$CAD 50 million of which are live (2012-2016). Live Lobster is Nova Scotia's top export to the European Union.

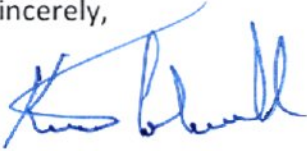
In addition to the economic loss, there is a high probability that this legislation will have a negative effect on the public's perception of Nova Scotia lobster, both within Norway and other European nations. This industry has worked hard for many years to develop a global reputation as a high quality, sustainable product- restricting trade pathways without a clear, direct link to the value chain will undoubtedly harm this good reputation.

Nova Scotia supports seafood traceability and appropriate import record keeping, but these measures should not result in disguised barriers to trade. Increasing access to educational material for potential importers and buyers, including wholesalers and restaurants/food service, may allow for a wider scope of permitting and lessen the impact on trade. NSDFA and the NS lobster industry are not convinced that live lobsters find their way into the environment during shipment to importers or secondary purchasers, including the food service industry.

Nova Scotia suggests that educational campaigns are a non-trade-distorting way to ensure the public is educated on proper handling of live lobsters, including the concept that releasing these animals into the local environment can be counter to their perceived goals. Our officials would be pleased to contribute to the development of a public awareness campaign alternative to meeting Norway's policy goals.

There are long, mutually-beneficial business relationships between Nova Scotia lobster exporters and Norwegian and European importers. We urge removal of this restriction that could result in unintended consequences for our respective stakeholders.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Keith Colwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "K".

Honourable Keith Colwell, E.C.N.S.

c. Honourable Geoff MacLellan, Minister of Trade