

C-FOAM Invited Seminar Series:

Dredging the Sydney Harbour: doing what HADD to be done



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Time: 2:30-4:00 pm, Wednesday, April 4, 2012

Place: DMS4170, 4th Floor Desmarais Building,
55 Laurier Avenue East, Ottawa

The dredging of the Sydney Harbour in 2011-2012 generated the largest Harmful Alteration, Damage or Destruction of Fish Habitat in Canadian history. A complicated application of DFO's HADD Policy under Section 31 of the Fisheries Act requires an effort to relocate marine macro-fauna from the path of the dredge, and the construction of 300 artificial reefs within the harbour. The work is being done by an unlikely partnership among the projects proponent (Sydney Ports Corporation), the Sydney Harbour fishermen (Association), the Regulator (Fisheries & Oceans Canada) and the local university (Cape Breton University). Impressive accomplishments and errors have been made to date by all parties. We have learned from them and will continue to do so. The process and outcomes highlight the profound significance of the current HADD policy as a mechanism for "polluter pays" in Canadian marine environmental law. The project also identifies three significant deficiencies in: a) it does not involve the fishing industry; b) it takes a very limited approach to ecosystem-based management of marine resources; c) it does not apply adaptive, outcomes-based management methods in a very challenging regime. We know enough to improve this important process.

La présentation sera faite en anglais./The presentation will be given in English. Refreshments will be served.