 

**Environmental Information: Use and Influence Report to BoFEP Annual Meeting**

The Environmental Information: Use and Influence (EIUI) interdisciplinary research program, based in the Faculty of Management at Dalhousie University, continues an active research and teaching agenda exploring the pathways and roles of information in marine science-policy interfaces. Over its twenty-year history this research program has been supported by research grants and contracts from various granting agencies and governmental organizations. For several years, the EIUI Research Program has also served as the Informatics Working Group of BoFEP.

**Leadership and Funding Transition**

The EIUI team is undergoing a transition in leadership prompted by new research funding awarded by the Canada First Research Excellence Fund to four universities: Dalhousie University, as lead, and Memorial University, Laval University, and Université de Québec à Rimouski. This new initiative, titled [Transforming Climate Action](https://www.ofi.ca/programs/transform-climate-action), with its focus on oceans, is being pursued through several research clusters, one of which is 3.2, “Empowering Diverse Actors to Participate Meaningfully in Climate-Ocean Policy and Action.” Drs. Sandra Toze (Information Science), Isabelle Caron (Public and International Affairs), and Philippe Mongeon (Information Science) in the Dalhousie Faculty of Management are co-leading the policy and bibliometrics components of this Cluster. The policy-related research is focusing on decision-making in municipal governments, beginning with a case study about Halifax, followed by other case studies in the Atlantic region. Graduate students are being engaged to assist with the research.

**Current Projects and Publications**

Several projects supported by a recent Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada research grant, which concluded in August 2024, are being wrapped up with manuscripts being prepared for publication. Two papers were published earlier this year, others are in preparation for submission to journals in the near future (see Appendix below). In August 2024, Simon-Luc Noël completed his Master of Environmental Studies thesis entitled, “An Examination of Recovery Feasibility Determination, and Factors Affecting Its Reassessment, for Inner Bay of Fundy Atlantic Salmon under the Species at Risk Act” (see Appendix below). All of these initiatives highlight the importance of understanding how credible, relevant, and legitimate information finds its way (or not) into decision processes for marine environmental sustainability.

**Public Lectures, Twitter, and Website**

EIUI has co-sponsored recent Information Science Public Lectures, including a lecture by Dr. Tim Kiessling, a visiting post-doctoral fellow from Kiel, Germany, entitled “Can the Public Contribute to Plastic Pollution Policy-Making through Community Science? A Vision for Participatory Legislation,” to be presented on 19 November 2024. EIUI maintains an active Twitter account averaging about 250 views / post ([twitter.com/EIUI\_Dal](https://twitter.com/EIUI_Dal)). Further details about the research team’s work are available at the EIUI website ([www.eiui.ca](http://www.eiui.ca)). Notably, blog entries are frequently posted on the website, including posts written by graduate students in the course noted below.

**Conferences**

The research team participated in the ACCESS/BoFEP Conference at the Huntsman Marine Science Centre, St. Andrews, New Brunswick, 4-7 June 2024. Among presentations and posters by the team, graduate student, Alexandre Legault, presented the award-winning poster, “Optimizing evidence uptake in climate policy: The case of coastal urban municipalities” (co-authored with Sandra Toze, Isabelle Caron, and Bertrum MacDonald). Several graduate students offered their perspectives about the conference in the blog post, “[’Tides of change’ – The ACCESS-Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership Conference, 4-7 June 2024](https://eiui.ca/tides-of-change-the-access-bay-of-fundy-ecosystem-partnership-conference-4-7-june-2024/),” published on the EIUI website on 4 July 2024.

**Graduate Course**

Another iteration of the graduate course, Information in Public Policy and Decision Making, was offered during the Winter 2024 term to Masters students from several programs at Dalhousie University. The course was taught by EIUI team member, Dr. Rachael Cadman, and several prominent guest speakers based in Canada and the UK participated throughout the term. This course is noted for introducing students to many aspects of evidence-informed decision-making. Several blog entries prepared by the students are available on the EIUI website. Another offering of the course will be available in the Winter 2025 term.

To summarize, the research of the EIUI team continues in support of the overall mandate of BoFEP – to use scientific and social science information more effectively at the science-policy interface in support of a more sustainable ocean.

Bertrum MacDonald,

For the EIUI Research Team

14 November 2024

**Appendix**

**Papers Published**

Eck, K., Soomai, S. S., & MacDonald, B. H. (2024). On the development of criteria for determining the effectiveness of technical working groups: A case study about information processes in marine conservation and fisheries management in Belize. *Environmental Science & Policy*, *160*, 103863. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2024.103863>

MacDonald, B. H., & Manuel, P. (2024). Information, public decision-making, and climate change: The many roles of grey literature. *The Grey Journal*, *20*(2), 99-109.

**Blog Posts Related to BoFEP**

Eck, K., Soomai, S. S., & MacDonald, B. H. (2024, September 17). *New paper*: On the development of criteria for determining the effectiveness of technical working groups. EIUI Blog. <https://eiui.ca/new-paper-on-the-development-of-criteria-for-determining-the-effectiveness-of-technical-working-groups/>

Khan, J., Legault, A., Margeson, K., Martinez Calderon, D., & Wells, P. G. (2024, July 4). “Tides of change” – The ACCESS-Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership conference, 4-7 June 2024. EIUI Blog. <https://eiui.ca/tides-of-change-the-access-bay-of-fundy-ecosystem-partnership-conference-4-7-june-2024/>

MacDonald, B. H., & Manuel, P. (2024, April 10). *New paper*: Information, public decision-making, and climate change: The many roles of grey literature. EIUI Blog. <https://eiui.ca/new-paper-information-public-decision-making-and-climate-change-the-many-roles-of-grey-literature/>

Noël, S-L. (2024, October 29). Dynamics of information flow at the science-policy interface for endangered Inner Bay of Fundy Atlantic salmon. EIUI Blog. <https://eiui.ca/dynamics-of-information-flow-at-the-science-policy-interface-for-endangered-inner-bay-of-fundy-atlantic-salmon/>