

**A SPECIES AT RISK ACT SECTION 11 CONSERVATION AGREEMENT TO
SUPPORT THE RECOVERY OF THE SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALE**

This SARA Section 11 Conservation Agreement (the “**Agreement**”) to support the recovery of the Southern Resident Killer Whale is made as of this 3rd day of May, 2024.

Between

The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, who is responsible for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (“DFO”)

And

The Minister of Transport, who is responsible for the Department of Transport (“TC”)

And

The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (“VFPA”)

And

The Pacific Pilotage Authority (“PPA”)

And

The Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia (“COSBC”)

And

The Shipping Federation of Canada (“SFC”)

And

Cruise Lines International Association (“CLIA”)

And

The Council of Marine Carriers (“COMC”)

And

The International Ship Owners Alliance of Canada (“ISAC” together with CSBC, SFC, CLIA and CMC the “Associations”)

(Collectively, the “**Parties**” and each a “**Party**”)

PREAMBLE:

Whereas the southern resident killer whale (SRKW) is a species listed as Endangered under part 2 of Schedule 1 of SARA;

And whereas the purposes of SARA are to prevent wildlife species from being extirpated or becoming extinct, to provide for the recovery of wildlife species that are extirpated, endangered or threatened as a result of human activity and to manage species of special concern to prevent them from becoming endangered or threatened;

And whereas commercial cargo volumes and transits have increased over the last several decades and further increases are anticipated in years to come;

And whereas the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard is the competent minister under SARA for aquatic species, except with respect to individuals in or on federal lands administered by the Parks Canada Agency;

And whereas the Government of Canada is committed to the long-term conservation, survival and recovery of aquatic species at risk to ensure the long-term viability of species and to enhance their survival in the wild;

And whereas the Recovery Strategy and the Action Plan identify three major anthropogenic threats to the recovery of the SRKW population including reduced prey availability, environmental contaminants and acoustic and physical disturbance;

And whereas in May 2018, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, as the Minister responsible for Parks Canada Agency, as competent minister under SARA for SRKW formed the opinion that the SRKW population faced imminent threats to its survival and recovery; including from the threat of acoustic and physical disturbance;

And whereas TC has jurisdiction over maritime traffic, has a mandate to promote efficient, environmentally responsible and safe transportation, and has a responsibility to address the environmental impacts of maritime transportation and to mitigate the effects of acoustic and physical disturbance from vessels and vessel strikes on endangered marine mammals;

And whereas DFO collaborates with other government departments, Indigenous Peoples, wildlife management boards or similar entities, industry and stakeholders to create the conditions necessary to enable responsible management and recovery of aquatic species at risk;

And whereas the VFPA has a mandate to facilitate Canada's trade objectives, ensuring goods are moved safely, while protecting the environment and considering local communities;

And whereas in 2014 the VFPA initiated the ECHO Program to better understand and reduce the impact of Large Commercial Vessels on at-risk whales throughout the southern coast of British Columbia and with a long-term goal of developing mitigation measures that lead to a quantifiable reduction in threats to whales as a result of shipping activities, with a focus on reducing threats from acoustic and physical disturbance;

And whereas DFO is acting in its role to support implementation of the Recovery Strategy and the Action Plan as it pertains to recovery objective 3 for SRKW to ensure that disturbance from human activities does not prevent recovery;

And whereas TC is acting in its role of managing the impact of Large Commercial Vessels on SRKW;

And whereas the other Parties are acting in their capacity as participants in the ECHO Program;

And whereas the purpose of ECHO Program Advisory Working Group (AWG), which includes the Parties to this Agreement, with Indigenous advisors, conservation and environmental groups, and other government agencies and organizations, is to be actively engaged and provide informed advice on the development and execution of the Program in order to solve complex problems with practical solutions;

And whereas the long-term goal of the ECHO Program is to develop and implement initiatives that result in a quantifiable reduction in threats to at-risk whales as a result of shipping activities, which since 2017, have included the development, implementation, and monitoring of voluntary measures focused on reducing underwater noise from Large Commercial Vessels within key foraging areas of SRKW critical habitat;

And whereas the PPA has a mandate to provide safe, reliable and efficient marine pilotage and related services in the coastal waters of British Columbia;

And whereas the Associations represent Large Commercial Vessels and commit to continue working to ensure their respective members are contributing to efforts to reduce acoustic and physical threats to the SRKW from their operations;

And whereas the Parties recognize the value of the stewardship approach to species conservation, and have demonstrated commitment to the collaborative process in the conservation, survival and recovery of SRKW as facilitated by the ECHO Program;

And whereas the Parties recognize the importance of co-benefits arising out of this Agreement and the need to consider the importance of potential positive impacts on other at-risk whales;

And whereas the Parties wish to cooperate in the taking of measures to support survival and recovery of the SRKW as aligned with the recovery goal and objective 3 in the Recovery Strategy and associated recovery actions in the Action Plan;

And whereas Canadian critical habitat of SRKW is currently defined to include waters of the southern Strait of Georgia, Boundary Pass, Haro Strait, and Juan de Fuca Strait and southwestern Vancouver Island, much of which overlaps with the shipping lane used by Large Commercial Vessels that call at the Port of Vancouver;

And whereas Section 11 of SARA provides that the competent minister may, after consultation with every other competent minister, and with the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council or any of its members if they consider it appropriate to do so, enter into a conservation agreement with any government in Canada, organization or person to benefit a species at risk or enhance its survival in the wild;

And whereas such a conservation agreement must provide for the taking of conservation measures and any other measures consistent with the purposes of SARA, and may include measures with respect to monitoring the status of the SRKW population; developing and implementing education and public awareness programs; developing and implementing recovery strategies, action plans and management plans; protecting the SRKW populations' habitat, including its critical habitat; or undertaking research projects in support of recovery efforts for the SRKW population;

And whereas the Parties recognize the need for an adaptive approach to guide and adjust over time those conservation measures taken pursuant to this Agreement, as more information becomes available;

And whereas the Parties recognize the need to reduce acoustic and physical threats specifically from Large Commercial Vessels in SRKW critical habitat

And whereas Canada is fully committed to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Canada – through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDA) – has worked with Indigenous Peoples to develop an action plan (the “UNDA Action Plan”) to achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration, and to identify measures needed to ensure federal laws are consistent with the UN Declaration;

And whereas Federal departments who are signatories to this Agreement shall continue to uphold commitments entered into under the UNDA Action Plan, and remain open to exploring constructive agreements with Indigenous Peoples to implement conservation measures for species at risk;

And whereas the Government of Canada acknowledges they may have a legal duty to consult with Indigenous Peoples whose section 35 rights may be adversely impacted by decisions made under this Agreement;

And whereas the Parties entered into a SARA Section 11 Conservation Agreement (the “2019 Agreement”) to support the recovery of the Southern Resident Killer Whale effective May 10, 2019, for a five-year term;

And whereas the 2019 Agreement may be renewed with written consent of all Parties;

And whereas pursuant to section 7.5 of the 2019 Agreement, the Parties prepared a report summarizing outcomes and deliverables of the 2019 Agreement up to and including period 4 to inform discussions on renewal of the 2019 Agreement;

And whereas, having considered the report above, the Parties are of the view that the 2019 Agreement should be renewed for an additional five-year term;

Now therefore, the Parties commit to the following:

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1. The following terms defined hereunder and used in this Agreement, when capitalized, will have the following meaning:

1.1.1. “**Action Plan**” means the Action Plan for the Northern and Southern Resident Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*) in Canada, 2017;

1.1.2. “**Acoustic disturbance**” means anthropogenic underwater noise from Large Commercial Vessels that interferes with SRKW life functions including feeding and foraging, reproduction, socializing, and resting such that the marine environment cannot support effective acoustic social signalling and echolocation and results in loss of habitat availability and/or function;

1.1.3. “**Annual report**” means an annual public report describing the implementation of measures undertaken as part of this Agreement which will address:

1.1.3.1. Progress against annual and five-year term commitments made by the Parties under this Agreement; and

1.1.3.2. A summary of annual research findings;

1.1.4. “**Best available information**” includes relevant scientific, Indigenous knowledge, technical, navigational safety, operational, commercial and economic data;

1.1.5. “**Committee**” means a committee entitled the conservation agreement management committee, created by the Parties under the ECHO Program, to oversee the implementation and the effectiveness of this Agreement;

1.1.6. “**ECHO Program**” means the VFPA-led Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation program which is aimed at better understanding and reducing the impact of shipping activities on at-risk whales throughout the southern coast of British Columbia;

1.1.7. “**Effective date**” means the date of the last signature affixed to this Agreement;

1.1.8. “**Large Commercial Vessels**” means vessels such as bulk carriers, tankers, container vessels, vehicle carriers or cruise vessels to which the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea applies and to tugs which are engaged in towing other vessels or objects or assisting in the manoeuvring of ocean-going vessels;

1.1.9. “**Physical disturbance**” means the physical presence and proximity of Large Commercial Vessels to individual SRKW that impedes life functions such as feeding, foraging, reproduction, socializing or resting, which may affect SRKW at both the individual and population level;

- 1.1.10. “**Recovery Strategy**” means the Recovery Strategy for the Northern and Southern Resident Killer Whales (*Orcinus orca*) in Canada (2008, amended in 2011, and 2018);
- 1.1.11. “**SARA**” means the *Species at Risk Act*;
- 1.1.12. “**SRKW**” means southern resident killer whale.
- 1.2. For those terms that are defined in SARA, the terms in SARA apply to this Agreement, unless defined in section 1 of this Agreement.

2. GOAL AND PURPOSE

- 2.1. In the context of supporting SRKW population recovery objectives, the goal of this Agreement, within its term, is to reduce, quantifiably where possible, Acoustic disturbance and Physical disturbance to SRKW by current and future Large Commercial Vessels in Pacific Canadian waters, in particular those vessels that call at the Port of Vancouver, or otherwise operate in SRKW critical habitat, through voluntary actions by the Parties.
- 2.2. The purposes of this Agreement are to:
 - 2.2.1. Continue the participation of the Parties in the ECHO Program and other relevant initiatives outlined in Appendix A, through which participation the Parties will work collaboratively towards the development, implementation, monitoring, assessment and adaptation of voluntary measures to reduce, quantifiably where possible, Acoustic disturbance and Physical disturbance to SRKWs by Large Commercial Vessels ; and
 - 2.2.2. Continue the role of the ECHO Program in advancing research and educational outreach to better understand how Large Commercial Vessels contribute to threats to SRKW and their critical habitats.
- 2.3. For greater certainty, this Agreement, including any commitments outlined in Section 5 and in the Appendix A, addresses only the threats of Acoustic disturbance and Physical disturbance to SRKWs by Large Commercial Vessels.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. The following principles will guide interpretation and implementation of this Agreement:
 - 3.1.1. **Collaboration** – the Parties will cooperate in the development, delivery, testing, monitoring and evaluation of measures that may better inform and reduce the contribution of Large Commercial Vessels to threats to SRKW;
 - 3.1.2. **Threat reduction** – the efforts of the Parties will be designed to work toward achieving quantifiable reductions to the contribution of Large Commercial Vessels to threats to SRKW;
 - 3.1.3. **Safety** – navigational safety will be a primary consideration in the development and delivery of measures to reduce the contribution of Large Commercial Vessels to threats to SRKW;
 - 3.1.4. **Commercial and operational realities** – the Parties will take commercial and operational realities of ship owners, operators and ship agents into consideration in the development and delivery of measures to reduce the contribution of Large Commercial Vessels to threats to SRKW;
 - 3.1.5. **Innovation** – the Parties recognize the importance of developing and implementing new and innovative approaches to achieve the goal of the Agreement.
 - 3.1.6. **Continuous improvement** - the Parties aim to continuously learn, adapt and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of threat reduction research, design and technology, on-water initiatives, and engagement and educational activities;

- 3.1.7. **Co-benefits** – the Parties will seek opportunities to implement threat reduction measures for SRKW that may also offer co-benefits to other species at risk;
- 3.1.8. **Transparency** – the Parties will make non-confidential information related to the development, implementation and monitoring of research and threat reduction measures publicly available subject to section 8.2 of this Agreement, any applicable data sharing agreements and any legislative provisions that would prevent them from doing so; and
- 3.1.9. **Engagement** – the Parties will actively engage with Indigenous Peoples, wildlife management boards or similar entities, and key stakeholders as collaborators or partners.

4. INTERPRETATION

- 4.1. The preamble hereof and any appendices hereto form an integral part of this Agreement.
- 4.2. This Agreement is not intended to create any legally binding obligations, duties, commitments or liabilities (contractual or otherwise) on any of the Parties. Nor does it create any new legal powers on the part of the Parties or affect in any way the powers, duties and functions of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans under the *SARA*, the *Fisheries Act* or any other federal legislation, or the Minister of Transport under the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001*, the *Canada Marine Act*, or any other federal legislation.
- 4.3. The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard enters into this Agreement under the authority of Section 11 of *SARA*.

5. ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE RECOVERY OF SRKW

- 5.1. The Parties acknowledge that:
 - 5.1.1. Recovery of the SRKW population will require an ecosystem approach applied on a long-term basis that takes into consideration all the threats to SRKW, and will require additional measures to those undertaken by the Parties pursuant to this Agreement;
 - 5.1.2. Effective implementation of recovery measures is a multifaceted and complex undertaking that depends on the commitment and cooperation of many different constituencies that will be involved in implementing the directions set out in the Recovery Strategy and Action Plan and is subject to appropriations, priorities, and budgetary constraints of the participating jurisdictions and organizations;
 - 5.1.3. Other limiting factors that may affect SRKW survival and recovery are beyond the influence of the Parties, including but not limited to events occurring to SRKW in waters of the United States;
 - 5.1.4. With the Best available information from the voluntary measures which have been implemented through the ECHO Program to date focused on reducing underwater noise within key foraging areas of SRKW critical habitat and show benefits in terms of underwater noise and co-benefits for physical disturbance and strike risk reduction, the Parties commit to ongoing implementation of similar voluntary efforts in support of SRKW survival and recovery as outlined in Section 5 of this Agreement;
- 5.2. In support of the goal set out in section 2.1 and subject to section 9.2, the Parties commit to the relevant measures below, which are further detailed in Appendix A.
 - 5.2.1. VFPA commits to the following:
 - A) Continuing to manage the ECHO Program, including the following measures:

- i. Provide an ongoing framework for engagement, trust building, collaboration and information sharing for the Parties and other ECHO Program participants;
 - ii. Coordinate with the Parties and other ECHO Program participants to develop and implement annual work plans that support the goal and objective of the Agreement;
 - iii. Coordinate with the Parties the advancement of selected research projects to fill priority knowledge gaps and inform the development of SRKW threat reduction targets and measures for Large Commercial Vessels;
 - iv. Coordinate with the Parties and other ECHO Program participants to identify appropriate, biologically relevant SRKW threat reduction targets for Large Commercial Vessels using Best available information;
 - v. Coordinate with the Parties and other ECHO Program participants to develop and implement measures that have the potential to reduce threats to SRKW from Large Commercial Vessels;
 - vi. Coordinate with the Parties and other ECHO Program participants to monitor, evaluate and report on the efficacy of those threat reduction measures;
 - vii. Coordinate with the Parties and other ECHO Program participants to integrate new information, as appropriate, into an adaptive framework for planning and implementation of future measures; and
 - viii. Maintain educational outreach efforts to raise awareness of new and emerging research and measures relating to Large Commercial Vessels.
- B) Working with TC to develop engagement approaches to encourage Acoustic disturbance and Physical disturbance reduction incentives for Large Commercial Vessels in other ports in Canada and internationally.

5.2.2. The PPA commits to the following:

- A) Continuing to actively participate in the ECHO Program to advance the development and implementation of SRKW threat reduction targets and measures addressing impacts from vessels under pilotage;
- B) Continuing to support evaluation, and provide input on the navigational safety aspects of relevant research projects and voluntary measures being implemented through the ECHO Program;
- C) Continuing to support the ECHO Program with the provision of data from PPA vessel transit records;
- D) Continuing to make all efforts to encourage a high level of participation from the BC Coast Pilots in the voluntary measures being implemented through the ECHO Program; and
- E) Exploring opportunities to improve efficiencies in the pilotage system to reduce barriers to participation in the voluntary initiatives, when and where possible.

5.2.3. The Associations commit to the following:

- A) Continuing to actively participate in the ECHO Program to advance the development and implementation of SRKW threat reduction targets and measures addressing impacts from Large Commercial Vessels;
- B) Continuing to support evaluation, and provide input on the navigational safety aspects of relevant research projects and voluntary measures being implemented through the ECHO Program;

- C) Continuing to support research efforts to identify and implement technical solutions such as, for instance, vessel design or retrofit options, to reduce Acoustic disturbance from Large Commercial Vessels; and
- D) Continuing to make all efforts to encourage a high level of participation from their members in the voluntary measures being implemented through the ECHO Program.

5.2.4. TC commits to the following:

- A) Continuing to actively participate in the ECHO Program and providing timely advice on key government priorities;
- B) Sharing data and outcomes of TC research projects with the ECHO Program participants;
- C) Continuing efforts to provide data from underwater hydrophone stations existing during the term of this Agreement to the VFPA, as manager of the ECHO Program, for research purposes, subject to confidentiality restrictions as per Section 8.2;
- D) Continuing to lead discussions and collaborations with the United States Coast Guard, the Canadian Coast Guard, Indigenous Peoples and key stakeholders as it relates to the development and implementation of voluntary SRKW threat reduction measures referred to in this Agreement, in or near trans-boundary waters;
- E) Continuing best efforts to maintain an underwater hydrophone station in SRKW critical habitat to better assess the Acoustic disturbance and measure the noise profile of individual vessels;
- F) Providing international leadership on underwater radiated noise management planning, including but not limited to quiet vessel design, and engaging with the other Parties to ensure ongoing input and involvement in international discussions on policy and technical solutions to Acoustic disturbance mitigation;
- G) Continuing to discuss with the Parties the challenges that ship owners may face as a result of the implementation of voluntary measures under this Agreement, and work to identify ways to potentially mitigate those impacts, to the extent possible; and
- H) Working with VFPA to develop engagement approaches to encourage the development of Acoustic disturbance and Physical disturbance reduction incentives for Large Commercial Vessels at other ports in Canada and internationally.

5.2.5. DFO commits to the following:

- A) Continuing to actively participate in the ECHO Program and providing timely advice on key government priorities and on the development of the ECHO Program's projects to ensure they support the survival and recovery needs of the SRKW, as well as sharing data and outcomes of DFO-led SRKW research projects;
- B) Continuing efforts to develop and maintain underwater hydrophone station(s) in key areas in support of the implementation of the Agreement; and
- C) Engage and collaborate with the other Parties on the development and amendment of SARA recovery strategies and action plans, as needed, to positively support the identification and implementation of measures promoting the survival, recovery and protection of SRKW.

5.3. The Parties will work together with the active engagement and informed advice of the AWG members, to identify and consider the application of technological, design and operational methods of reducing threats to SRKW from Large Commercial Vessels.

- 5.4. The Parties will work together with the active engagement and informed advice of the AWG members, to identify needs, priorities and funding opportunities to implement the engagement, research, outreach and threat reduction measures identified in this Agreement.
- 5.5. Through the ECHO Program, the Parties will work together with the active engagement and informed advice of the AWG members to identify possible geographic areas within SRKW critical habitat to trial and implement voluntary measures that operationally mitigate Acoustic disturbance from Large Commercial Vessels. Where new information becomes available regarding SRKW habitat usage outside of critical habitat, other potential geographic areas may also be considered.

6. GOVERNANCE

- 6.1. The Parties will establish the Committee to oversee the implementation and the effectiveness of this Agreement.
- 6.2. The Committee will have representation from one member of each of the Parties and be governed by a terms of reference developed and agreed to by the Committee.
- 6.3. The Committee will meet a minimum of once per year.
- 6.4. The Committee will meet with the AWG a minimum of twice per year.

7. MONITORING AND REPORTING

- 7.1. As part of the ECHO Program's annual work planning and evaluation process, the Committee, with the active engagement and informed advice of the AWG members, will ensure that a monitoring and assessment framework is developed and implemented to facilitate measurement of progress on actions identified within this Agreement.
- 7.2. The Committee, with the active engagement and informed advice of the AWG members, will ensure that goals, milestones and timelines are included in the monitoring and assessment framework and that, employing an adaptive approach, these goals, milestones and timelines are revisited and updated annually.
- 7.3. The Committee, with the active engagement and informed advice from the AWG members, will review the status of this Agreement against the agreed upon monitoring and assessment framework and working with the ECHO Program prepare and issue the Annual report.
- 7.4. Based on the Annual report, the Parties will evaluate the actions annually and, with the AWG members, propose any additional commitments to increase the likelihood of achieving reductions to threats from Large Commercial Vessels to support the recovery of SRKW.
- 7.5. Prior to the end of the five-year term of this Agreement, the Committee, working with the ECHO Program, will prepare a report on outputs, outcomes and deliverables of the Agreement in relation to reducing threats to SRKW from Large Commercial Vessels. This report will be used to inform discussions on possible renewal of this Agreement.

8. INFORMATION SHARING

- 8.1. Each Party agrees, subject to section 8.2 and to any applicable data sharing agreements, policies and legislative provisions that would prevent them from doing so, to provide the other Parties access at no charge to available data and information relevant to the implementation of this Agreement.
- 8.2. Some data and information, such as vessel specific data, may be considered commercially sensitive and require confidentiality or may have been obtained with an understanding of confidentiality. Except as required by law, data and information so identified by a Party, or a collaborator in programs and activities related to this Agreement, will be held confidential by the VFPA, as manager of the

ECHO Program, and shall not be distributed to any other parties or beyond at any time or in any manner, without the explicit agreement of the affected Party or collaborator in programs.

- 8.3. DFO shall share information with, and provide notification to, the other Parties of upcoming Species at Risk program recovery and planning initiatives and implementation in as timely a manner as feasible, subject to federal legislation.
- 8.4. TC shall share information and provide notification to the other Parties of activities, events or projects in the area covered by this Agreement that could reasonably affect measures outlined in this Agreement in as timely a manner as feasible, subject to federal legislation.
- 8.5. The VFPA, PPA and Associations shall share information and provide notification to the other Parties, insofar as they are able to and in as timely a manner as feasible, of activities, events or projects in the area covered by this Agreement that could reasonably affect measures outlined in this Agreement.

9. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1. For greater certainty, the Parties are fully committed to prioritize efforts to secure resources to meet the commitments under the Agreement.
- 9.2. Notwithstanding section 9.1, the Parties acknowledge and agree that implementation of this Agreement and the commitments of the Parties contained herein are subject to their respective appropriations, priorities, funding and budgetary constraints.

10. TERM, MODIFICATION, TERMINATION AND RENEWAL

- 10.1. This Agreement commences on the Effective date and will remain in force for a term of five years from the Effective date.
- 10.2. This Agreement can only be amended, renewed or extended with the written consent of all of the Parties.
- 10.3. Any Party may withdraw from this Agreement by giving not less than three months written notice to the other Parties.
- 10.4. Subject to section 9.2, each Party acknowledges that should it fail to make good faith efforts to implement the commitments it has made in this Agreement, the remaining Parties, acting jointly, have the discretion to require that Party to withdraw from the Agreement.
- 10.5. The Parties may include additional signatories to this Agreement, with the mutual written consent of all the Parties.

11. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 11.1. Subject to the terms of this Agreement, if a disagreement arises concerning the interpretation or implementation of this Agreement, including the implementation of the measures outlined in Appendix A (any such disagreement being a "Dispute"), the Parties will make good faith efforts to attempt to resolve the Dispute, including by participating in the following dispute resolution processes:
 - 11.1.1. The Party raising the Dispute will deliver to the other Parties a written summary of the issues in the Dispute along with proposed measures to resolve the Dispute;
 - 11.1.2. Within 30 days of receipt of notice of the Dispute, senior decision-makers of the Parties will meet (in person or by virtual means) and seek to resolve the Dispute;
 - 11.1.3. If the Dispute remains unresolved after the meeting of the senior-decision makers, the Parties may, under terms mutually agreeable, utilize non-binding dispute resolution processes, including facilitation, mediation, or obtaining independent technical or legal advice; and

- 11.1.4. If the Dispute remains unresolved after ninety (90) days from the meeting of the senior decision-makers or, if a non-binding dispute resolution process is utilized, from the conclusion of the process, the Agreement termination process outlined in section 10.3 may be entered at the request of any Party.

12. ECHO PROGRAM NOT FETTERED

- 12.1. Nothing in this Agreement shall alter the governance structure, goal or mission of the ECHO Program. Furthermore, nothing in this Agreement shall derogate or otherwise fetter the ability of the VFPA to alter, modify or discontinue the ECHO Program at any time or from time to time.

13. ASSOCIATIONS NOT FETTERED

- 13.1. Nothing in this Agreement shall alter the mandate and the activities of the associations.

14. PARLIAMENT NOT FETTERED

- 14.1. Nothing in this Agreement shall in any way affect the powers, duties or functions of the Parliament of Canada or the Executive.

15. MINISTER NOT FETTERED

- 15.1. Nothing in this Agreement shall in any way affect the powers, duties or functions of the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, the Minister of TC or any other minister.

16. SIGNATURES

In witness whereof, the Parties have executed this Conservation Agreement as of the dates set out below:

Susan Chambers, Regional Director General, Pacific Region of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

Signed on the 19th day of April 2024.

Serge Bijimine, Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy of Transport Canada

Signed on the 3rd day of May 2024.

And

On behalf of the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, as represented by its President and Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Secretary:

Peter Xotta, President and Chief Executive Officer
Signed on the 2nd day of May 2024.

Mark Gustafson, Corporate Secretary
Signed on the 29th day of April 2024.

On behalf of the Pacific Pilotage Authority, as represented by its Chief Executive Officer:

John Wilson, Chief Executive Officer
Signed on the 2nd day of May 2024.

On behalf of the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia, as represented by its President:

Bonnie Gee, President
Signed on the 2nd day of May 2024.

On behalf of the Shipping Federation of Canada, as represented by its President:

Chris Hall, President and Chief Executive Officer
Signed on the 2nd day of May 2024.

On behalf of the Cruise Lines International Association, as represented by its Senior Vice President, Global Maritime Policy:

Donald Brown, Senior Vice President, Global Maritime Policy
Signed on the 24th day of April 2024.

On behalf of the Council of Marine Carriers, as represented by its President:

Paul Hilder, President
Signed on the 19th day of April 2024.

On behalf of the International Ship-owners Alliance of Canada, as represented by its Secretary General:

Lanna Hodgson, Secretary General
Signed on the 2nd day of May 2024.

Appendix A: Table of Strategic Priorities, Multi-year Goals, and Annual Actions

Glossary

Abbreviation	Meaning/Definition
AIS	Automatic Identification System
AVTM	Active Vessel Traffic Management
AWG	Advisory Working Group
CII	Carbon Intensity Indicator
DFO	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
EEXI	Energy Efficiency eXisting Ship Index
ESI	Environmental Ship Index
GoC	Government of Canada (refers to DFO and/or TC)
H/B slowdown	Haro Strait and Boundary Pass slowdown
MCTS	Marine Communications and Traffic Services
MMD	Marine Mammal Desk
NavSim	NavSim is a Portable Pilot Unit (PPU) used by professional mariners, most notably the BC Coast Pilots
TC	Transport Canada
TSS	Traffic Separation Scheme
URN	Underwater radiated noise
US	United States of America
VFPA	Vancouver Fraser Port Authority
WIOW	Whales in our Waters tutorial
WRAS	WhaleReport Alert System

Strategic Priorities

Abbr.	Meaning/Definition
EE	Engage and Educate - Convene collaborators, maintain high levels of engagement and seek opportunities to raise awareness of ECHO Program learnings
PA	Plan and Take Action - Take action to quantifiably reduce threats from shipping and advance real-time whale presence notifications to facilitate on-water adaptive management
RI	Research and Innovate - Better understand the impacts of shipping to whales and support and encourage the transition to quieter vessels

Strategic Priority 1: Engage and Educate

Convene collaborators, maintain high levels of engagement and seek opportunities to raise awareness of ECHO Program learnings

<div>EE1</div> <div>Maintain management of the ECHO Program and act as the secretariat for the conservation agreement</div> <div>Lead VFPA</div>					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Convene regular ECHO Program Advisory Working Group meetings to seek input and guidance to adaptively manage the program.	Convene regular ECHO Program Advisory Working Group meetings to seek input and guidance to adaptively manage the program.	Convene regular ECHO Program Advisory Working Group meetings to seek input and guidance to adaptively manage the program.	Convene regular ECHO Program Advisory Working Group meetings to seek input and guidance to adaptively manage the program.	Convene regular ECHO Program Advisory Working Group meetings to seek input and guidance to adaptively manage the program,
2	Convene the ECHO Program Conservation Agreement Management committee at least annually.	Convene the ECHO Program Conservation Agreement Management committee at least annually.	Convene the ECHO Program Conservation Agreement Management committee at least annually.	Convene the ECHO Program Conservation Agreement Management committee at least annually.	Convene the ECHO Program Conservation Agreement Management committee at least annually.
3	Convene the technical committees (Vessel Operator Committee and Acoustic Technical Committee) on an as needed basis.	Convene the technical committees (Vessel Operator Committee and Acoustic Technical Committee) on an as needed basis.	Convene the technical committees (Vessel Operator Committee and Acoustic Technical Committee) on an as needed basis.	Convene the technical committees (Vessel Operator Committee and Acoustic Technical Committee) on an as needed basis.	Convene the technical committees (Vessel Operator Committee and Acoustic Technical Committee) on an as needed basis.

EE2

Involve and collaborate with interested Indigenous Peoples on vessel related threats to SRKW and implementation of threat reduction measures, including ECHO Program activities and facilitate input into those activities*

Lead | GoC (TC & DFO)

Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	GoC will involve and collaborate with interested Indigenous Peoples on the ECHO Program activities related to this agreement and facilitate input into those activities. Enable regular opportunities through AWG meeting agendas for GoC to share information on SRKW-related Indigenous engagement.	GoC will involve and collaborate with interested Indigenous Peoples on the ECHO Program activities related to this agreement and facilitate input into those activities. Enable regular opportunities through AWG meeting agendas for GoC to share information on SRKW-related Indigenous engagement.	GoC will involve and collaborate with interested Indigenous Peoples on the ECHO Program activities related to this agreement and facilitate input into those activities. Enable regular opportunities through AWG meeting agendas for GoC to share information on SRKW-related Indigenous engagement.	GoC will involve and collaborate with interested Indigenous Peoples on the ECHO Program activities related to this agreement and facilitate input into those activities. Enable regular opportunities through AWG meeting agendas for GoC to share information on SRKW-related Indigenous engagement.	GoC will involve and collaborate with interested Indigenous Peoples on the ECHO Program activities related to this agreement and facilitate input into those activities. Enable regular opportunities through AWG meeting agendas for GoC to share information on SRKW-related Indigenous engagement.
2	Seek opportunities for Canadian and US governments to exchange and connect regarding transboundary First Nations and Tribes relevant activities.	Seek opportunities for Canadian and US governments to exchange and connect regarding transboundary First Nations and Tribes relevant activities.	Seek opportunities for Canadian and US governments to exchange and connect regarding transboundary First Nations and Tribes relevant activities.	Seek opportunities for Canadian and US governments to exchange and connect regarding transboundary First Nations and Tribes relevant activities.	Seek opportunities for Canadian and US governments to exchange and connect regarding transboundary First Nations and Tribes relevant activities.

**The goal of EE2 and associated annual actions are separate and distinct from and do not preclude the Government of Canada’s obligation under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act.*

<div>EE3</div> <div>Collaborate with interested Indigenous groups about the ECHO Program to provide opportunities for further knowledge sharing and relationship building</div> <div>Lead VFPA</div>					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Explore opportunities to build connections, engage and involve interested Indigenous groups in the ECHO Program through knowledge sharing and/or collaborating on relevant projects. Linkages between EE2, EE3 and RI1.	Explore opportunities to build connections, engage and involve interested Indigenous groups in the ECHO Program through knowledge sharing and/or collaborating on relevant projects. Linkages between EE2, EE3 and RI1.	Explore opportunities to build connections, engage and involve interested Indigenous groups in the ECHO Program through knowledge sharing and/or collaborating on relevant projects. Linkages between EE2, EE3 and RI1.	Explore opportunities to build connections, engage and involve interested Indigenous groups in the ECHO Program through knowledge sharing and/or collaborating on relevant projects. Linkages between EE2, EE3 and RI1.	Explore opportunities to build connections, engage and involve interested Indigenous groups in the ECHO Program through knowledge sharing and/or collaborating on relevant projects. Linkages between EE2, EE3 and RI1.

EE4**Advance understanding and share learnings on reducing vessel generated underwater noise at national and international fora****Lead | GoC (TC & DFO) & VFPA**

Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	GoC to continue to be a leader at the IMO, including supporting the implementation of guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping. Linkages between EE4 and PA4.	GoC to continue to be a leader at the IMO, including supporting the implementation of guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping. Linkages between EE4 and PA4.	GoC to continue to be a leader at the IMO, including supporting the implementation of guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping. Linkages between EE4 and PA4.	GoC to continue to be a leader at the IMO, including supporting the implementation of guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping. Linkages between EE4 and PA4.	GoC to continue to be a leader at the IMO, including supporting the implementation of guidelines for the reduction of underwater noise from commercial shipping. Linkages between EE4 and PA4.
2	VFPA: Support International Association of Ports and Harbors, Transport Canada and IMO member states as requested, including participation in relevant IMO workshops, meetings, etc.	VFPA: Support International Association of Ports and Harbors, Transport Canada and IMO member states as requested, including participation in relevant IMO workshops, meetings, etc.	VFPA: Support International Association of Ports and Harbors, Transport Canada and IMO member states as requested, including participation in relevant IMO workshops, meetings, etc.	VFPA: Support International Association of Ports and Harbors, Transport Canada and IMO member states as requested, including participation in relevant IMO workshops, meetings, etc.	VFPA: Support International Association of Ports and Harbors, Transport Canada and IMO member states as requested, including participation in relevant IMO workshops, meetings, etc.
3	Share learnings and information on underwater noise guidelines, management plans, underwater radiated noise targets and technical solutions to stakeholders such as local and international mariners, owners, operators, ship builders and shippers through webinars, conferences, etc. Linkages between EE4 and RI9.	Share learnings and information on underwater noise guidelines, management plans, underwater noise reduction targets, and technical solutions to stakeholders such as local and international mariners, owners, operators, ship builders and shippers through webinars, conferences, etc. Linkages between EE4 and RI9.	Share learnings and information on underwater noise guidelines, management plans, underwater noise reduction targets, and technical solutions to stakeholders such as local and international mariners, owners, operators, ship builders and shippers through webinars, conferences, etc. Linkages between EE4 and RI9.	Share learnings and information on underwater noise guidelines, management plans, underwater noise reduction targets, and technical solutions to stakeholders such as local and international mariners, owners, operators, ship builders and shippers through webinars, conferences, etc. Linkages between EE4 and RI9.	Share learnings and information on underwater noise guidelines, management plans, underwater noise reduction targets, and technical solutions to stakeholders such as local and international mariners, owners, operators, ship builders and shippers through webinars, conferences, etc. Linkages between EE4 and RI9.

4	Develop communications plan with the goal to share key learnings, increase the visibility and promote the successes of the ECHO Program nationally and internationally.	Execute communications plan to share key learnings, increase the visibility and promote the successes of the ECHO Program nationally and internationally.	Execute communications plan to share key learnings, increase the visibility and promote the successes of the ECHO Program nationally and internationally.	Execute communications plan to share key learnings, increase the visibility and promote the successes of the ECHO Program nationally and internationally.	Execute communications plan to share key learnings, increase the visibility and promote the successes of the ECHO Program nationally and internationally.
---	---	---	---	---	---

EE5

Support and collaborate on incentive programs nationally and internationally for more efficient and quieter vessels

Lead | VFPA & GoC (TC)

Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Engage with national and international ports to encourage incentive programs for quieter and more efficient vessels.	Engage with national and international ports to encourage incentive programs for quieter and more efficient vessels. Explore opportunities to have underwater noise reduction measures considered by international ports that share major maritime routes with the Port of Vancouver. Linkages between EE5 and EE6.	Host/attend international fora to promote port authority incentive programs for quieter and more efficient vessels. Explore opportunities to have underwater noise reduction measures considered by international ports that share major maritime routes with the Port of Vancouver. Linkages between EE5 and EE6.	Engage with national and international ports to encourage incentive programs for quieter and more efficient vessels. Explore opportunities to have underwater noise reduction measures considered by international ports that share major maritime routes with the Port of Vancouver. Linkages between EE5 and EE6.	Engage with national and international ports to encourage incentive programs for quieter and more efficient vessels. Explore opportunities to have underwater noise reduction measures considered by international ports that share major maritime routes with the Port of Vancouver. Linkages between EE5 and EE6.
2	Support the development and implementation of the ESI underwater noise criteria, as required.	Support the development and implementation of the ESI underwater noise criteria, as required.	Promote availability of ESI underwater noise criteria at fora or to other port incentive programs.		

EE6**Promote and support the EcoAction incentive program to encourage cleaner and quieter vessels calling the Port of Vancouver****Lead | VFPA**

Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	<p>Promote availability of EcoAction program incentives, including at port conferences, port authority customer meetings, and direct engagement with partners like class societies, Green Marine, ship owners and technology companies.</p> <p>Linkage between EE6 and EE5.</p>	<p>Promote availability of EcoAction program incentives, including at port conferences, port authority customer meetings, and direct engagement with partners like class societies, Green Marine, ship owners and technology companies.</p> <p>Make access to published reports on quieting technologies more easily available.</p> <p>Linkage between EE6 and EE5.</p>	<p>Promote availability of EcoAction program incentives, including at port conferences, port authority customer meetings, and direct engagement with partners like class societies, Green Marine, ship owners and technology companies.</p> <p>Linkage between EE6 and EE5</p>	<p>Promote availability of EcoAction program incentives, including at port conferences, port authority customer meetings, and direct engagement with partners like class societies, Green Marine, ship owners and technology companies.</p> <p>Linkage between EE6 and EE5.</p>	<p>Promote availability of EcoAction program incentives, including at port conferences, port authority customer meetings, and direct engagement with partners like class societies, Green Marine, ship owners and technology companies.</p> <p>Linkage between EE6 and EE5.</p>
2	<p>Evaluate new and existing underwater noise reduction technologies for the EcoAction incentive program. Assess underwater noise criteria for effectiveness and applicability and revise EcoAction program underwater noise incentives accordingly.</p>	<p>Evaluate new underwater noise reduction technologies/ programs/ certifications for inclusion in EcoAction incentive program, as applicable.</p> <p>Evaluate the uptake of underwater noise reduction criteria under the EcoAction incentive program.</p>	<p>Evaluate new underwater noise reduction technologies/ programs/ certifications for inclusion in EcoAction incentive program, as applicable. If available, integrate Environmental Ship Index underwater noise criteria into EcoAction incentive program.</p>	<p>Evaluate new underwater noise reduction technologies/ programs/ certifications for inclusion in EcoAction incentive program, as applicable.</p> <p>Evaluate EcoAction incentive program for its effectiveness in incentivizing underwater noise reduction.</p>	<p>Evaluate new underwater noise reduction technologies/ programs/ certifications for inclusion in EcoAction incentive program, as applicable.</p>

EE7 Administer and expand the reach of the Whales in our Waters (WLOW) tutorial and explore other educational materials Lead VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Promote and monitor uptake of WLOW online tutorial.	Promote and monitor uptake of WLOW online tutorial.	Promote and monitor uptake of WLOW online tutorial.	Promote and monitor uptake of WLOW online tutorial.	Promote and monitor uptake of online tutorial.
2	Review and update, as required, WLOW tutorial content with collaborative partners.	Explore streamlining the tutorial system to remove barriers for shipping companies to access the tutorial and increase users.	Review and update, as required, WLOW tutorial content with collaborative partners.		Review and update, as required, WLOW tutorial content with collaborative partners.
3		Evaluate certification process for seafarers and explore integrating whale avoidance and underwater noise information into the process.	Seek feedback from collaborative partners on what, if any, additional educational materials are needed to support reducing impacts of shipping on whales. Develop materials as required.	Seek feedback from collaborative partners on what, if any, additional educational materials are needed to support reducing impacts of shipping on whales. Develop materials as required.	Seek feedback from collaborative partners on what, if any, additional educational materials are needed to support reducing impacts of shipping on whales. Develop materials as required.

Strategic Priority 2: Plan and Take Action

Take action to quantifiably reduce threats from shipping and advance real-time whale presence notifications to facilitate on-water adaptive management

PA1 Coordinate and encourage industry participation in the Haro Strait and Boundary Pass voluntary ship slowdown Lead VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.
2	Assess potential modifications to slowdown parameters using various methodologies, incorporating relevant scientific, economic, safety, operational considerations, cultural and other information sources.	Assess potential modifications to slowdown parameters using various methodologies, incorporating relevant scientific, economic, safety, operational considerations, cultural and other information sources.	Assess potential modifications to slowdown parameters using various methodologies, incorporating relevant scientific, economic, safety, operational considerations, cultural and other information sources.	Operationalize slowdown speed parameters based on outcomes of Period 6-8 assessments.	Operationalize slowdown speed parameters based on outcomes of Period 6-9 assessments.
3	Analyze and adjust communications on acoustic benefit of the Haro-Boundary slowdown from baseline to slowdown periods.	Analyze and adjust communications on acoustic benefit of the Haro-Boundary slowdown from baseline to slowdown periods.	Analyze and adjust communications on acoustic benefit of the Haro-Boundary slowdown from baseline to slowdown periods.		
4			Evaluate the potential for dynamic slowdown windows based on progress of whale presence detection and real-time vessel notification technologies.	Test dynamic slowdown windows based on the outcomes of periods 7 and 8. Linkages between PA1, PA5 and RI10.	Test dynamic slowdown windows based on the outcomes of periods 7,8 and 9. Linkages between PA1, PA5 and RI10.

	Linkages between PA1, PA5 and RI10.				
5	Maintain collaboration with US partners.	Maintain collaboration with US partners.	Maintain collaboration with US partners.	Maintain collaboration with US partners.	Maintain collaboration with US partners.

PA2					
Coordinate and encourage industry participation in the Swiftsure Bank voluntary ship slowdown					
Lead VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary slowdown and report on outcomes.
2	Assess potential modifications to slowdown parameters using various methodologies, incorporating relevant scientific, economic, safety, operational considerations, cultural and other information sources.	Assess potential modifications to slowdown parameters using various methodologies, incorporating relevant scientific, economic, safety, operational considerations, cultural and other information sources.	Assess potential modifications to slowdown parameters using various methodologies, incorporating relevant scientific, economic, safety, operational considerations, cultural and other information sources.	Operationalize slowdown parameters based on outcomes of Period 6-8 assessments.	Operationalize slowdown parameters based on outcomes of Period 6-9 assessments.
3	Maintain and enhance collaboration with US partners.	Maintain and enhance collaboration with US partners.	Maintain and enhance collaboration with US partners.	Maintain and enhance collaboration with US partners.	Maintain and enhance collaboration with US partners.

PA3 Coordinate and encourage industry participation in the Strait of Juan de Fuca lateral displacement initiative for tugs Lead VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Coordinate the voluntary lateral displacement initiative and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary lateral displacement initiative and report on outcomes.	Coordinate the voluntary lateral displacement initiative and report on outcomes.		
2	Work with Transport Canada to explore the possibility of formalizing the lateral displacement zone through regulation or other tools.	Work with Transport Canada to explore the possibility of formalizing the lateral displacement zone through regulation or other tools.	Work with Transport Canada to explore the possibility of formalizing the lateral displacement zone through regulation or other tools.		
3	Explore real-time outreach to vessels not participating in voluntary lateral displacement initiative.	Explore real-time outreach to vessels not participating in voluntary lateral displacement initiative.			

PA4

Explore and trial new on-water threat reduction initiatives for Large Commercial Vessels where safe and feasible

Lead | All

Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Explore opportunities to engage tugs in new or existing on-water threat reduction initiatives.	To be determined on an annual basis.	To be determined on an annual basis.	To be determined on an annual basis.	To be determined on an annual basis.
2	Evaluate and consider the implementation of new initiatives based on research outcomes, future traffic composition, AVTM, regional noise targets research outcomes and/or other inputs. Linkages to RI goals.	Evaluate and consider the implementation of new initiatives based on research outcomes, future traffic composition, AVTM, regional noise targets research outcomes and/or other inputs. Linkages to RI goals.	Evaluate and consider the implementation of new initiatives based on research outcomes, future traffic composition, AVTM, regional noise targets research outcomes and/or other inputs. Linkages to RI goals.	Evaluate and consider the implementation of new initiatives based on research outcomes, future traffic composition, AVTM, regional noise targets research outcomes and/or other inputs. Linkages to RI goals.	Evaluate and consider the implementation of new initiatives based on research outcomes, future traffic composition, AVTM, regional noise targets research outcomes and/or other inputs. Linkages to RI goals.
3	Review the TSS feasibility study results in the context of potential implementation of new on-water threat reduction initiatives	Review the TSS feasibility study results in the context of potential implementation of new on-water threat reduction initiatives			

PA5

Support efforts to reduce Physical disturbance and strike risk to SRKW and other whale species, including the advancement of the Canadian Coast Guard's Marine Mammal Desk

Lead | All

Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Advance real-time notifications of whale presence through notification systems like WRAS, MCTS, MMD, etc. Work to identify preferred modality to provide notifications to commercial mariners. Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.	Advance real-time notifications of whale presence through notification systems like WRAS, MCTS, MMD, etc. Work to identify preferred modality to provide notifications to commercial mariners. Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.	Support real-time notifications of whale presence through WRAS, MCTS, MMD, etc. Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.	Support real-time notifications of whale presence through WRAS, MCTS, MMD, etc. Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.	Support real-time notifications of whale presence through WRAS, MCTS, MMD, etc. Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.
2		Support efficacy study to determine if and how notifications are informing threat reduction actions on the water (mariner slowed, changed course, etc.).	Support efficacy study to determine if and how notifications are informing threat reduction actions (mariner slowed, changed course, etc.).		
3	ECHO Program to attend and support the WRAS Advisory Committee.	ECHO Program to attend and support the WRAS Advisory Committee.	ECHO Program to attend and support the WRAS Advisory Committee.	ECHO Program to attend and support the WRAS Advisory Committee.	ECHO Program to attend and support the WRAS Advisory Committee.
4	MMD to lead the exploration of a rapid communications protocol to communicate with relevant mariners about recent strikes and areas of high strike risk for at-risk	Explore standardizing data collection of strike events and implement rapid communications with relevant mariners about	Explore standardized data collection of strike events and rapid communications with relevant mariners about temporal	Explore standardized data collection of strike events and rapid communications with relevant mariners about temporal	Explore standardized data collection of strike events and rapid communications with relevant mariners about temporal

	whales. Explore standardizing data collection of strike events.	temporal and spatial marine mammal strike risks.	and spatial marine mammal strike risks.	and spatial marine mammal strike risks.	and spatial marine mammal strike risks.
5	Collaborate with the US Cetacean Desk to align transboundary efforts.	Collaborate with the US Cetacean Desk to align transboundary efforts.	Collaborate with the US Cetacean Desk to align transboundary efforts.	Collaborate with the US Cetacean Desk to align transboundary efforts.	Collaborate with the US Cetacean Desk to align transboundary efforts.

	PA6 Reduce barriers or provide incentives to enable high participation in voluntary initiatives Lead GoC (TC) & PPA				
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Transport Canada to continue reimbursement program in 2024 season for additional pilotage costs in Haro Strait-Boundary Pass slowdown.	TC to continue reimbursement program in 2025 season for additional pilotage costs in Haro Strait-Boundary Pass slowdown.	TC to provide insight into the future of reimbursements.	TC to provide insight into the future of reimbursements.	TC to provide insight into the future of reimbursements.
2	Evaluate potential changes to pilotage reimbursement program and explore other ways to reduce barriers to participation and outside of the Transport Canada reimbursement program.	Evaluate potential changes to pilotage reimbursement program and explore other ways to reduce barriers to participation and outside of the Transport Canada reimbursement program.	Evaluate potential changes to pilotage reimbursement program and explore other ways to reduce barriers to participation and outside of the Transport Canada reimbursement program.	Evaluate potential changes to pilotage reimbursement program and explore other ways to reduce barriers to participation and outside of the Transport Canada reimbursement program.	Evaluate potential changes to pilotage reimbursement program and explore other ways to reduce barriers to participation and outside of the Transport Canada reimbursement program.

Strategic Priority 3: Research and Innovate

Better understand the impacts of shipping to whales and support and encourage the transition to quieter vessels

RI1					
Better understand temporal and spatial presence of SRKW and other whales to inform threat reduction initiatives					
Lead VFPA and GoC (DFO)					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Identify and amalgamate sources of whale presence and habitat use information including acoustic detections, sightings, and Indigenous knowledge, to investigate trends/ changes in spatial and temporal presence of SRKW and other whales. Linkages between EE2, EE3, PA goals and RI1.	Investigate the creation of a forum (potentially a workshop) to amalgamate regional whale sightings and habitat use from multiple sources as identified in Period 6. Linkages between EE2, EE3, PA goals and RI1.	Remain aware (though workshops or other fora) of whale sightings information, with particular focus on temporal and spatial presence and habitat use of SRKW, and review annually to inform PA goals. Linkages between EE2, EE3, PA goals and RI1.	Remain aware (though workshops or other forum) of whale sightings information, with particular focus on temporal and spatial presence and habitat use of SRKW, and review annually to inform PA goals. Linkages between EE2, EE3, PA goals and RI1.	Remain aware (though workshops or other forum) of whale sightings information, with particular focus on temporal and spatial presence and habitat use of SRKW, and review annually to inform PA goals. Linkages between EE2, EE3, PA goals and RI1.

RI2 Develop regional noise target(s) and/or other related management approaches for the shipping sector, and where appropriate, trial application of the targets and/or approaches, to assess and manage the sector’s noise contributions considering current and future traffic scenarios Lead GoC (DFO & TC) and VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	<p>ECHO Program to continue to convene a regional noise targets task group via meetings and/or workshops and continue to advance the development of regional noise targets and/or noise management approaches for the shipping sector. Share relevant information with task group members and strive for clear linkages between regional noise targets and benefits to SRKW.</p> <p>Linkages between RI2 and RI3.</p> <p>Linkages between RI2 and RI8.</p>	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.
2	<p>Transport Canada to establish a committee to explore opportunities and define elements of a regional pilot project in underwater noise management planning as defined by the revised IMO underwater noise guidelines.</p>	To be determined depending on the outcomes of Period 6.			

3	Maintain awareness and provide opportunities for input to related regional and national initiatives and where possible, coordinate to align and avoid duplication of effort.	Maintain awareness and provide opportunities for input to related regional and national initiatives and where possible, coordinate to align and avoid duplication of effort.	Maintain awareness and provide opportunities for input to related regional and national initiatives and where possible, coordinate to align and avoid duplication of effort.	Maintain awareness and provide opportunities for input to related regional and national initiatives and where possible, coordinate to align and avoid duplication of effort.	Maintain awareness and provide opportunities for input to related regional and national initiatives and where possible, coordinate to align and avoid duplication of effort.
---	--	--	--	--	--

RI3**Advance research on understanding underwater vessel noise impacts to SRKW and efficacy of mitigation approaches****Lead | GoC (DFO)**

Annual action(s)		Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Explore SRKW winter and nighttime habitat use.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.
2	Research effectiveness of integrated visual, acoustic and thermal imaging technology to determine and predict whale movement, estimate noise levels, and support whale-ship interaction avoidance measures.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.
3	Investigate acoustic offsetting approaches.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.
4	Incorporate learnings from DFO scientific research into on-water and other relevant initiatives. Linkages between RI2 and RI3.	Incorporate learnings from DFO scientific research into on-water and other relevant initiatives. Linkages between RI2 and RI3.	Incorporate learnings from DFO scientific research into on-water and other relevant initiatives. Linkages between RI2 and RI3.	Incorporate learnings from DFO scientific research into on-water and other relevant initiatives. Linkages between RI2 and RI3.	Incorporate learnings from DFO scientific research into on-water and other relevant initiatives. Linkages between RI2 and RI3.	Incorporate learnings from DFO scientific research into on-water and other relevant initiatives. Linkages between RI2 and RI3.

RI4 Support opportunities for optimizing vessel movements (timing of transits, anchorage, speeds, etc.) to reduce threats to SRKW Lead VFPA & GoC (TC)					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Engage and collaborate with VFPA AVTM program to evaluate the feasibility and impact of optimizing vessel movements, to reduce threats to SRKW, on efficient traffic management and supply chain fluidity, as it relates to the AVTM roll out process.	Engage and collaborate with VFPA AVTM program to evaluate the feasibility and impact of optimizing vessel movements, to reduce threats to SRKW, on efficient traffic management and supply chain fluidity, as it relates to the AVTM roll out process.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis
2	Evaluate the opportunities and challenges, including potential acoustic benefits, associated with using tidal lift and convoys.	Better understand underwater noise profile and contributions of vessels at anchorage in SRKW critical habitat.			

RI5 Monitor and evaluate changes and trends in vessel movements (traffic patterns, speeds and composition) and how these may affect ECHO Program on-water initiatives Lead VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Evaluate trends in AIS enabled vessel traffic patterns, speeds and compositions over past ~10 years within the regional geographic scope of the ECHO Program. Share findings with AWG members to support other analysis/ future traffic predictions.	Better understand composition and underwater noise contributions of non-AIS traffic.			
2		Investigate the differences in underwater noise signatures for tankers and escort tugs transiting independently and tethered.	Investigate the effects of IMO emissions regulations (such as CII, EEXI) on ECHO Program on-water initiatives.		

RI6 Evaluate co-benefits and impacts of ECHO Program on-water initiatives, and other technologies supporting underwater noise reduction Lead VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Evaluate air emissions reductions from the ECHO Program slowdowns, including complete transit from Swiftsure Bank to Port of Vancouver.	Continue to evaluate air emissions reductions from the ECHO Program slowdowns, including complete transit from Swiftsure Bank to Port of Vancouver.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.
2	Progress the development of the whale strike risk model, including density estimations, as available, to evaluate the strike risk benefits of the ECHO Program slowdowns.	Progress the development of the whale strike risk model, including density estimations, as available, to evaluate the strike risk benefits of the ECHO Program slowdowns.	Progress the development of the whale strike risk model, including density estimations, as available, to evaluate the strike risk benefits of the ECHO Program slowdowns.	To be assessed on an annual basis.	To be assessed on an annual basis.
3	Conduct literature review of multiple potential co-benefits of slowdowns and other underwater noise reduction technologies.				

RI7 Investigate and better understand how new vessel propulsion supports, or ancillary systems affect, underwater noise and on-water initiatives Lead All					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Evaluate (and if possible, work with a ship operator/ partner to trial) the potential noise benefits of alternate propulsion, supports, or ancillary systems (electric vessels, wind-assist, air lubrication etc.) Linkages between RI7 and RI9.	Evaluate (and if possible, work with a ship operator/ partner to trial) the potential noise benefits of alternate propulsion, supports, or ancillary systems (electric vessels, wind-assist, air lubrication etc.) Linkages between RI7 and RI9.	Evaluate (and if possible, work with a ship operator/ partner to trial) the potential noise benefits of alternate propulsion, supports, or ancillary systems (electric vessels, wind-assist, air lubrication etc.) Linkages between RI7 and RI9.	Evaluate (and if possible, work with a ship operator/ partner to trial) the potential noise benefits of alternate propulsion, supports, or ancillary systems (electric vessels, wind-assist, air lubrication etc.) Linkages between RI7 and RI9.	Evaluate (and if possible, work with a ship operator/ partner to trial) the potential noise benefits of alternate propulsion, supports, or ancillary systems (electric vessels, wind-assist, air lubrication etc.) Linkages between RI7 and RI9.

RI8 Support the development and maintenance of an underwater hydrophone station(s) in SRKW critical habitat to monitor ambient noise and marine mammal presence Lead GoC (DFO & TC) & VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Continue monitoring ambient noise and SRKW presence in select locations of the Salish Sea (i.e., Haro Strait and Boundary Pass by VFPA, and multiple locations by GoC).	Continue monitoring ambient noise and SRKW presence in select locations of the Salish Sea (i.e., Haro Strait and Boundary Pass by VFPA, and multiple locations by GoC).	Continue monitoring ambient noise and SRKW presence in select locations of the Salish Sea (i.e., Haro Strait and Boundary Pass by VFPA, and multiple locations by GoC).	Continue monitoring ambient noise and SRKW presence in select locations of the Salish Sea (i.e., Haro Strait and Boundary Pass by VFPA, and multiple locations by GoC).	Continue monitoring ambient noise and SRKW presence in select locations of the Salish Sea (i.e., Haro Strait and Boundary Pass by VFPA, and multiple locations by GoC).
2	Use these locations to calculate acoustic benefit of on-water initiatives and inform other projects as appropriate. Linkages between RI2 and RI8.	Use these locations to calculate acoustic benefit of on-water initiatives and inform other projects as appropriate. Linkages between RI2 and RI8.	Use these locations to calculate acoustic benefit of on-water initiatives and inform other projects as appropriate. Linkages between RI2 and RI8.	Use these locations to calculate acoustic benefit of on-water initiatives and inform other projects as appropriate. Linkages between RI2 and RI8.	Use these locations to calculate acoustic benefit of on-water initiatives and inform other projects as appropriate. Linkages between RI2 and RI8.

R19 Maintain an underwater listening station(s) in SRKW critical habitat for vessel source level measurements, testing of vessel quietening technologies/operations and for other research Lead GoC (TC) & VFPA					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	Engage ship owners by providing vessel source level reports. Linkages between EE4 and R19.	Engage ship owners by providing vessel source level reports. Evaluate potential resources needed to reach out to loudest vessels. Linkages between EE4 and R19.	Engage ship owners by providing vessel source level reports. Evaluate potential for incentives or noise mitigation support for loudest vessels. Linkages between EE4 and R19.	Engage ship owners by providing vessel source level reports. Evaluate potential for incentives or noise mitigation support for loudest vessels. Linkages between EE4 and R19.	Engage ship owners by providing vessel source level reports. Evaluate potential for incentives or noise mitigation support for loudest vessels. Linkages between EE4 and R19.
2	Actively pursue partners to test/trial impacts of vessel design/ technologies on underwater noise using the Boundary Pass underwater listening station or other acoustic data sources. Linkages between R17 and R19.	Actively pursue partners to test/ trial impacts of vessel design/ technologies on underwater noise using the Boundary Pass underwater listening station or other acoustic data sources. Linkages between R17 and R19.	Actively pursue partners to test/ trial impacts of vessel design/ technologies on underwater noise using the Boundary Pass underwater listening station or other acoustic data sources. Linkages between R17 and R19.	Actively pursue partners to test/ trial impacts of vessel design/ technologies on underwater noise using the Boundary Pass underwater listening station or other acoustic data sources. Linkages between R17 and R19.	Actively pursue partners to test/ trial impacts of vessel design/ technologies on underwater noise using the Boundary Pass underwater listening station or other acoustic data sources. Linkages between R17 and R19.
3	Investigate the potential for developing a portal where companies can request/ confidentially view vessel source level data.				

<div>RI10</div> <div>Advance research and understanding of potential technologies to support real-time detection of whales</div> <div>Lead GoC (DFO & TC) and VFPA</div>					
Annual action(s)	Period 6 June 2024 - May 2025	Period 7 June 2025 - May 2026	Period 8 June 2026 - May 2027	Period 9 June 2027 - May 2028	Period 10 June 2028 - May 2029
1	<p>Pursue the integration of whale detections from real-time sources (hydrophones, infrared cameras, drones, etc.) into available notification networks (WRAS, AIS, NavSim, new technologies, etc.)</p> <p>Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.</p>	<p>Pursue the integration of whale detections from real-time sources (hydrophones, infrared cameras, drones, etc.) into available notification networks (WRAS, AIS, NavSim, new technologies, etc.)</p> <p>Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.</p>	<p>Pursue the integration of whale detections from real-time sources (hydrophones, infrared cameras, drones, etc.) into available notification networks (WRAS, AIS, NavSim, new technologies, etc.)</p> <p>Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.</p>	<p>Pursue the integration of whale detections from real-time sources (hydrophones, infrared cameras, drones, etc.) into available notification networks (WRAS, AIS, NavSim, new technologies, etc.)</p> <p>Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.</p>	<p>Pursue the integration of whale detections from real-time sources (hydrophones, infrared cameras, drones, etc.) into available notification networks (WRAS, AIS, NavSim, new technologies, etc.)</p> <p>Linkages between PA5, RI8 and RI10.</p>