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## **1.0 Strategic Planning**

### **1.1 Background**

In March 2005, OceansAdvance prepared a document which evaluated the current state of the Ocean technology Cluster in Newfoundland and Labrador with specific references to the first three years of operations of OceansAdvance. In light of the other developments which were taking place such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Marine Technology Strategy, Canadian Ocean Action Plan, this initiative was undertaken to develop an outline strategic plan for OceansAdvance for the coming five years.

OceansAdvance was incorporated as an independently jointly funded cluster initiative on April 1, 2005 and the document was designed to serve as an analysis of the current state of the sector as well as providing a reference plan for the upcoming Board of Directors and new Executive Director. The plan was the guiding instrument for OceansAdvance during 2005-2006.

The Board of Directors approved a revised plan outlining directions for 2006-2007 in April and held a strategic planning session in July 2006. This session focused on an assessment of the overall environment in which OceansAdvance operates with a view to refining its strategy and initiatives for the upcoming eighteen months. Hence, this document is built upon its predecessor plan developed in March 2005.

Modifications to the 2006-2007 goals and initiatives have been incorporated into the plan.

### **1.2 Process**

OceansAdvance basically follows an issues based model for strategic planning and is largely decision focused. In essence, it is a continuous planning model whereby decisions are made through the continuous identification and systematic resolution of strategic issues. The process gives a sharper focus on the issues as continuous decision oriented planning can be added to the agenda as conditions change.

Regular meetings of the Board allow adaptation and constant review of items as each strategic issue is addressed. Meetings also serve as a “forum” where issues can be raised and addressed by the Board of Directors and staff. This process increases the number of strategic decisions the organization makes each year.

## **2.0 Mission**

The mission of OceansAdvance is to foster and promote the development of an ocean technology industry cluster in Newfoundland and Labrador

## **3.0 Strategic Goals**

The goals for OceansAdvance are goals for the community in that they are focused on a specific technological sector. These goals are:

### **Marketing**

1. *Promote the ocean sector as a key driver in the provincial economy.*
2. *Support the branding of St. John's as a Center of Excellence in Ocean Technology regionally, nationally and internationally.*

### **Forum**

3. *Enhance interaction and communication between research and development (R&D), small and medium enterprises (SME's) and government.*

### **Promotion**

4. *Foster long term economic wealth and growth in the Newfoundland and Labrador Ocean Technology Sector.*
5. *Support and foster initiatives that require sustained effort from community members to identify opportunities impacting the Newfoundland & Labrador ocean technology community.*

## **4.0 Strategy**

The role for OceansAdvance is to encourage and focus individual and collective actions by the stakeholders and the national and international community to build an ocean technology cluster. Encouragement occurs on two levels; first, a softer broad community level which is intended to develop a positive mindset and second, a harder and more strategic level which develops activities. The first level empowers the growth and dissemination of knowledge, marketing and generally improving the profile of the cluster both within and outside the community. The more strategic activities involve identifying specific opportunities and developing community wide strategies to seize these opportunities thus creating additional activity in the cluster.

## **4.1 Strategy Implementation**

This strategy is achieved through the development of three major activities. The first is marketing, the production and dissemination of information that influences the stakeholder community and the world that Newfoundland and Labrador is the location of choice for ocean technology.

The second is forum, the venue through which the stakeholder community can identify opportunities, develop strategies and share results with the overall OceansAdvance objectives in mind.

The third is promotion of long-term projects in specific opportunity areas based on a consensus developed in the forum. The role of OceansAdvance is to develop and promote project ideas to the stakeholder community in a collaborative and proactive manner.

During 2006-2007 and for the balance of the year, implementation will focus on the initiatives identified to accomplish the goals.

For 2007-2008, OceansAdvance will concentrate on achievement of outstanding initiatives, as well as emerging and new opportunities that enable the organization to achieve results in support of its mission.

Additionally, in early 2007-2008, OceansAdvance will undertake an evaluation of its original mandate, mission, strategy and suite of activities and make appropriate realignments for the future.

## **5.0 Conclusions from Strategic Planning Session**

### **5.1 Environmental Scan**

The operating environment for OceansAdvance was assessed from the point of view of changes in the sector since 2003 and perceived impact and implications to 2008.

OceansAdvance has modified its focus in a minor way from “International Location of Choice”, that of attracting new companies into the province, to a more balanced approach of promoting the growth and development of new companies within the province.

The progress made towards promoting and marketing of the North West Atlantic Ocean observatory concept as a point of community coalescence has been positive. A partnership model is being explored in addition to an innovative governance model.

Ocean technology has received the attention of the province as referenced in the Speech from the Throne (2006) and is on the agenda for the provincial Department of Industry, Trade and Rural Development as well as the provincial Department of Business.

There has been continuous growth in small company development and expansion in medium and larger enterprises. A study commissioned by the Province and now underway will give us a current picture of this situation.

Politically, federal-provincial relations have changed somewhat, whereby, the province is expected to play more of a leadership role in identifying and championing economic development initiatives. The economic impact of the provincial-federal interplay on the sector is being constantly monitored. Overall, the political climate, as well as the public service, is supportive of the ocean sector. It also appears that the province is accepting of the lead role in ocean technology as an economic driver in the future growth of Newfoundland and Labrador.

## **5.2 Challenges**

The Federal Government's focus on the Oceans agenda is perceived to be somewhat neutral. While the Oceans Action Plan 2004 is nearing the end of its term in March 2007, there is no strong evidence to date of a second tier plan with specific references to ocean technology. Thus, leadership from the province is deemed to be critical to gaining Federal support and identifying ocean technology as a growth sector for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Community awareness of the role and work of OceansAdvance is a major and continuous challenge. This is reflected in the knowledge of OceansAdvance about the sector as well as the individual company knowledge of the work of OceansAdvance. In the first instance, this is an opportunity for OceansAdvance. The matter of market intelligence and the role of OceansAdvance continue to be a challenge. OceansAdvance will address this matter as well as appropriate mechanisms in collaboration with its sector members and cooperating industry associations.

Connectedness to Memorial University and the research community is another significant challenge. Ocean technology growth and development and overall cluster maturity demands a strong relationship with the research community and identifying ways to impact this agenda is fundamental to this success. In essence, promoting and fostering the alignment of the institutions agenda with the private sector is deemed a critical building block to a successful cluster.

The ocean technology sector in Newfoundland and Labrador is largely an export business. Traditionally, Newfoundland and Labrador has no track record of developing supplier industries based on resource industries. Domestic demand is also lacking in the wider Canadian ocean technology sector. Government, the fishery, marine transportation and the oil industry dominate the consuming sector. While the government has been cited as slow to buy domestically, the fishery also has a history of buying offshore. The oil industry is international in approach. While the global ocean technology market is large, a strong domestic market base is normally at the root of a cluster and a spring

board to export success. Recent studies have shown an improved balance in the domestic and international market for ocean technology sales.

Marketing the cluster internationally is a long term objective and is deemed important given the patterns of alliances and partnerships which are developed by sector companies especially in the United States, parts of Europe and Asia. OceansAdvance continues to be part of select foreign marketing, trade and technology transfer initiatives undertaken by federal and provincial governments and agencies. The matter of OceansAdvance role in market intelligence and the balancing of its ongoing activities with expectations of specific companies will remain a challenge.

The changing role of governments, both federal and provincial is a product of politics and economics. With the minority status of the Federal Government, general federal-provincial relationships and respective roles for the province and federal government in economic development are perceived to be undergoing change. The role of the public service during this time is also reflective of this uncertainty and redefinition. Thus, to find a balance between private sector and industry proactivity and assertiveness in the face of the public sector role clarification in leading economic development strategies is a delicate road in a changing environment.

Cluster development in Newfoundland and Labrador requires that all aspects of activity related to oceans must be a collaborative effort to effectively fuel innovation. This includes government, primary industrial activity, educational activities, and most importantly, the supporting industrial activities. Industry, trade and community associations who support these interests are also critical to its cluster success. OceansAdvance needs to continuously advocate and promote this point of view.

### **5.3 Mission**

The mission was reviewed and it was reaffirmed that OceansAdvance is a voice for the ocean technology industry and a promotional mechanism for ocean technology collaboration. OceansAdvance was also recognized as a marketing tool to advocate for ocean technology as a strong contributor to Newfoundland and Labrador's future economic development.

### **5.4 Goals**

The relevancy of the goals was also discussed and the following goals were reaffirmed.

1. Promote the Ocean sector as a key driver in the provincial economy. This goal is focused on the development of wealth and the future economy and the advocacy role for OceansAdvance in influencing public policy.

2. Support St. John's as a Center of Excellence in Ocean technology, regionally, nationally and internationally. This goal implies collaboration within a developing technology community culture where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
3. Enhance interaction and communication between research and development (R&D) small and medium enterprises (SME's) and government. This goal is focused on the importance of integration, alignment and the building of a critical mass as foundations to the cluster.
4. Foster long term economic wealth and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador's ocean technology community. This goal will promote the industry as one that has a long term future.
5. Support initiatives that require sustained effort from community members to identify opportunities impacting the Newfoundland and Labrador ocean technology community. This goal implies a shared vision, collaborative culture and meaningful partnerships across the cluster community.

## **5.5 Activities**

OceansAdvance is a flexible organization that responds to the evolving needs of its members. To accomplish its goals, OceansAdvance has structured its activities around; a "forum" concept, whereby, sharing ideas, ocean technology relevant information and cross fertilization of concepts and practices is basic to its success; "marketing" advocating for the ocean technology community and; "promotion" initiating dialogue with stakeholders, stimulating new projects and finding community points of coalescence.

### **5.5.1 Forum**

Forum will be an umbrella to optimize networking and learning. It will have four manifestations: the "forum" itself, focus groups, co-sponsored breakfast speaker series and roundtables.

The Forum itself will strengthen the Community, giving members opportunity to network and share ideas. The forum format will be somewhat structured, yet flexible, to meet the evolving needs of the cluster community.

Focus groups will bring in experts on a subject of special interest on a timely basis.

The Speaker Series, a co-sponsored initiative with the City of St. John's will continue.

Roundtables will be introduced giving members the opportunity to discuss new and emerging issues of importance to the growth of the sector. Special emphasis will be given to envisioning and anticipating future trends and opportunities.

### **5.5.2 Marketing**

Marketing is focused on the production and dissemination of information that influences the stakeholder community and the world that Newfoundland and Labrador is an innovative centre for ocean technology.

A key objective will be to increase the focus and debate on ocean technology issues. This objective will be achieved by enhancing the engagement of companies and strengthening the linkages with stakeholder groups and industry associations. Additionally, new collaborative efforts will be built with other agencies that have ocean technology as a pillar in their mandate.

OceansAdvance will continue to focus on its marketing targets through its suite of networks; ocean technology sector, all governments and allied departments, Memorial University, research groups and the Institute of Ocean Technology.

### **5.5.3 Promotion**

Promotion will focus on longer term opportunities that should benefit the members of OceansAdvance and collectively collaborate to make projects happen. An important part of OceansAdvance initiative is developing the shared responsibility, shared effort mindset that is required to develop a true cluster. A successful North West Atlantic Ocean Observation System would be a model for other ocean technology developments in the province. Sources of information will be the Board itself, contacts within the industry and ideas emanating from the Forum and its various manifestations. Business opportunities that OceansAdvance will pursue are currently beyond the reach of individual companies but collectively will attract interest and points of coalescence.

OceansAdvance will remain a flexible and proactive organization. Strategic thinking will be a key fundamental pillar. OceansAdvance will be opportunistic and optimize its various market intelligence sources in support of sustained long term economic growth in the Newfoundland and Labrador ocean technology sector.

## **5.6 Evaluation of OceansAdvance**

The issue of evaluation of OceansAdvance was discussed. While the organization has attained broad community and public support, it is important to attempt a quantification of its success both for the health of the organization and as a go forward strategy.

There is broad agreement on a significant increase (albeit anecdotally) in the level of industry engagement in the affairs of oceans technology over the past two years. Additionally, ocean technology is now on the public agenda as reflected in the 2006 Speech from the Throne. While OceansAdvance is being sought out for advice and direction on ocean technology issues and increasingly more persons and companies express interest in being a part of the organization, the Board believes that

OceansAdvance should devise an evaluation instrument which is more tangible and, to the degree possible, objective in its measurements.

OceansAdvance will define an evaluation instrument during the fall of 2006. This instrument will be based on its strategic goals and will reflect ; growth in the number and size of companies in the oceans sector over the past three years, employee growth ,degree of networking between companies, perception of members on relevance of support by OceansAdvance, relevancy of its suite of activities, and public perceptions on cluster maturity.

## **6.0 Goals and Initiatives 2006-2007**

### **6.1 Goal 1: Marketing (Internal)**

#### **Description:**

*Promote the ocean sector as a key driver in the provincial economy.*

#### **Initiatives:**

- 1 Strengthen initiatives to influence public policy through the identification of local cluster development issues, advocate for cluster participants and system change at the local, provincial and national levels.
- 2 Stimulate new ideas or new approaches into “group of eight” senior officials to focus on joint provincial-federal initiatives in ocean technology.
- 3 Support the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development in the implementation of its Innovation Strategy enhancing opportunities for ocean technology companies.
- 4 Strengthen relationships with provincial industry associations in the promotion of oceans sector.
- 5 Collaborate with the St. John’s Board of Trade and City of St. John’s to develop complementary policies/programs in support of cluster growth and economic development.
- 6 Stimulate the broadening of the oceans technology community in an effort to foster the importance of critical mass based on a multi front and shared responsibility mindset.
- 7 Continue to articulate needs of SME’s to governments, funding and venture capital agencies.

## **6.2 Goal 2: Marketing (External)**

### **Description:**

*Support the branding of St. John's as a Center of Excellence in Ocean Technology regionally, nationally and internationally.*

### **Initiatives:**

- 1 Participate in NOIA's oil and gas week activities and International Petroleum Show and conference, 2006.
- 2 Support work by CCMC in planning and promoting Ocean Innovation Conference 2006 in St. John's, NL. (October 2006).
- 3 Participate with City of St. John's Economic Development Division in its initiatives; Ocean Conference Center and the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Oceans Industries Week.
- 4 Participate with the provincial government and Irish partners in the development of a seabed mapping partnership initiative.
- 5 Assume a leadership role in collaboration with St. John's Board of Trade on the development of an Oceans Technology Research Park.
- 6 Co-host an information session with Petroleum Research Atlantic Canada on offshore petroleum technology research opportunities.
- 7 Initiate activities to build on the collaboration with Marine and Oceanographic Technology Network (M.O.T.N.) leading to a new regional international alliance in support of private sector growth and development.
- 8 Support and partner with Canada Israel Industry Research and Development Foundation (CIIRDF) in oceans technology.
- 9 Collaborate with CMOS-CGU-AMS 2007 by providing support in the form of advisory services for the 2007 International Congress.
- 10 Initiate dialogue with national and international ocean contacts with a view to strengthening alliance building and information exchange.
- 11 Review the present communication strategy with a focus on redevelopment of print material and web site.

### **6.3 Goal 3: Forum**

#### **Description:**

*Enhance interaction and communication between research and development (R&D), small and medium enterprises (SME's) and government.*

#### **Initiatives:**

- 1 Co-host 6 Ocean Technology Speaker Series events with the City of St. John's.
- 2 Organize 5 forums to strengthen relationship building and engagement of companies across the cluster.
- 3 Develop an alliance with Memorial University Harris Public Policy Center to support graduate and senior student-industry knowledge collaboration/exchange.
- 4 Introduce a "Roundtable" concept as a mechanism to share ideas and emerging opportunities in ocean technology. Organize three such roundtables this year.
- 5 Foster and distribute economic/policy research and reports in support of ocean technology growth and cluster development.
- 6 Complete development of a cluster map that identifies key participants in the ocean technology community.
- 7 Continue to participate in Canada's Ocean Science Technology Partnership.
- 8 Stimulate and foster the creation of ocean technology focus groups in an effort to fuel innovation and enhance collaborative initiatives.
- 9 Initiate dialogue with Memorial University units in building community capability, research, development, and commercialization alliances through the Atlantic Innovation Initiatives or other research mechanisms.
- 10 Advocate within Memorial University for institutional-industry alignment in support of ocean technology sector development.

#### **6.4 Goal 4: Promotion**

**Description:**

*Foster long term economic wealth and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador Ocean Technology Sector.*

**Initiative:**

- 1 Support CCMC in implementation of “Smart Bay” project and promote local involvement by SME’S in the project.
- 2 Stimulate consultations and dialogue across the Ocean Technology Sector to create value in the proposed North West Atlantic Ocean Observation System.
- 3 Initiate dialogue with stakeholders to broaden the Ocean Observatory concept focused on diversifying the range of ocean technology applications.
- 4 Identify a new oceans project around which additional members of the cluster community can find coalescence.

#### **6.5 Goal 5: Special Initiatives Program**

**Description:**

*Support initiatives that require sustained effort from community members to identify opportunities impacting the Newfoundland & Labrador ocean technology community.*

**Initiatives:**

- 1 Collaborate with the Ocean Technology community in the development of a broadly based governance model and inclusive partnership organization for a Northwest Atlantic Ocean Observatory System.
- 2 Advocate for a proponent to initiate and undertake a study “Economic Benefit Analysis of the Impact of Offshore Development Fund on Newfoundland and Labrador Ocean Technology Community.”
- 3 Develop a concept paper on “Optimizing the Oil and Gas Industry in Support of Oceans Technology.”
- 4 Develop an evaluation instrument to assess the achievement of the goals and activities of OceansAdvance.