

BLUE ECONOMY TASK FORCE 2.0

September 2025

Bold Text indicates [Statute Language/Requirements](#)

PURPOSE OF TASK FORCE:

“...to support the State’s emergence as a center for the blue economy innovation and opportunity in the 21st century.”

MEMBERS OF TASK FORCE:

- **One member of the Senate (pending appointment by the Senate President, anticipated 9/24/25)**

Senator Jill Duson – Cumberland County

- **Two members of the House (pending appointment by the Speaker, anticipated 9/24/25)**

Representative Morgan Rielly – Westbrook

Representative Tiffany Strout – Harrington

- **19 “Voting” Members to be appointed by the DECD Commissioner¹:
Representatives of public and private research institutions:**

1. Gulf of Maine Research Institute (Rhiannon Hampson)
2. University of Maine (Jake Ward)
3. Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences (Beth Orcutt)
4. Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center (Anne Langston Noll)
5. The Downeast Institute (Brian Beal)
6. Island Institute (Nick Battista), Co-Chair (pending appointment)

Businesses that are innovating in various blue economy sectors:

7. Salmonics (Cem Giray)
8. Shred Electric (Nick Planson)
9. Oceans Balance (Mitchell Lench)
10. Kennebec River Biosciences (Bill Keleher)

Fisheries businesses:

11. Luke’s Lobster (Ben Conniff)
12. Greenhead Lobster (Johnny Sonnenfeld)

¹ The DECD commissioner shall ensure that a majority of the members of the task force membership represent a blue economy business or an entity directly involved in the commercialization of blue economy-related research and innovation.

Aquaculture businesses:

- 13. Cooke Aquaculture (Steve Hedlund)
- 14. Atlantic Aqua Farms Ltd. (Jeff Auger)

Equity investors in blue economy businesses:

- 15. CEI (Keith Bisson)
- 16. Bold Ocean Ventures (Tim Agnew)
- 17. Norfolk Green (Jason Mitchell)

- **President of the Maine Technology Institute or the president's designee**

- 18. Brian Whitney, President

- **DECD Commissioner Appointed from State Agency Co-Chair:**

- 19. Office of Business Development Director

- **DECD Commissioner Appointed Co-Chair:** Nick Battista, Island Institute

- Non-Appointed, “Non-Voting” Members (invited to participate):

- Aquaculture Research Institute (Deborah Bouchard)
- University of New England (Cameron Wake)
- Maine Maritime Academy (Brendyn Sarnacki)
- Blue Trace (Chip Terry)
- Portland Fish Exchange (Robert Vanmeter)
- Hodgdon Yachts (Audrey Hodgdon)
- Ocean Renewable Power Company (Nathan Johnson)
- Windward Development Group (Sean Ireland)
- The Roux Institute at Northeast University (Philip Bogden)
- The Landing School (John Caron)
- Machias Savings Bank (Larry Barker)
- Washburn-Doughty (Kristen Danaher)
- Reed & Reed (Jack Parker)
- Acadian Seaplants (Alison Feibel)

- Other Participants:

- 1. Governor's Office of Policy Innovation & The Future (Scott Kleiman)
- 2. Maine Aquaculture Association (Sebastian Belle)
- 3. Maine Coast Fishermen's Association (Ben Martens)
- 4. New England Ocean Cluster (Patrick Arnold)
- 5. Maine International Trade Center (Dan Berger)

- Consultants:

- 1. Mike Conathan
- 2. Blaine Grimes

3. Charles Colgan
4. Laura Singer
5. Dana O'Brien