

2025 Lobster Industry Survey Results

At the Lobster Advisory Council (LAC) held on April 28th, 2025, the Council unanimously voted to collaborate with the Department to poll Maine's lobster industry on current and future management. The goal of this survey was to collect input on Maine's lobster resource and fishery, as well as help inform the Department's discussions at the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The survey was sent to 4,697 industry members with response rate of 29%. The LAC and the Department greatly appreciate your participation in this survey.

	Increasing	Decreasing	Stable	No Opinion
1. Based on your fishing experience do you feel the lobster resource is:	8%	26%	63%	3%

	Increase	Decrease	No Change	No opinion
2. Compared to 5 years ago, how have the lobsters in your traps changed?				
V-Notched	49%	12%	34%	4%
Egg Bearing	58%	6%	31%	4%
Legal Sized	9%	36%	49%	6%
Sublegal	43%	14%	36%	8%
Oversized	22%	19%	52%	8%

	<u>% of Respondents</u>
3. What do you feel is the biggest challenge to the long-term health of the lobster resource?	
Too much competition in my fishing area (Licenses and/or traps)	9%
Changes in the lobster distribution (spatially, seasonally, age-class)	21%
Changes in water quality & climate (e.g. Salinity, temperature, nutrient)	16%
Predation pressures (native and invasive species)	27%
Habitat degradation (disturbance from lobster fishing industry and other fishing activities)	25%
Other	2%

	<u>% of Respondents</u>
4. In considering the future of fleet operations, which of these areas presents the greatest concern for maintaining sustainability?	
Right Whale Protection Regulations	26%
Market uncertainty and variability (e.g. prices, tariffs, processing capacity)	17%
Cost of inputs (e.g. Bait, fuel, gear, boats)	32%
Crew availability	13%
Aging of the fleet	8%
Other	4%

	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Neutral	Somewhat Ineffective	Very Ineffective
5. How effective do you believe current Area 1 conservation measures are in protecting the lobster resource?	43%	25%	22%	6%	3%

	<u># of Responses in Favor</u>
6. If required to take action as a result of the Stock Assessment what additional conservation measures, if any, would you support conversation on in Area 1?	
Increase gauge on the small end?	292
Lower trap limit?	656
Limited entry/license changes	361
Use of seed fund for lobster hatcheries	461
Seasonal closures	480
Area closures	71
Use of seed fund for purchasing and v-notching lobsters	354
Improved emphasis on V-Notching	522
Other	120

	Very Informed	Somewhat Informed	Neutral	Somewhat Uninformed	Very Uninformed
7. How informed do you feel you are about potential upcoming regulatory changes affecting the lobster fishery?	5%	48%	17%	11%	19%

	Not Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Concerned	No Opinion
8. How concerned are you about future whale conservation measures impacting the way that you fish?	6%	23%	68%	3%

	Not Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Concerned	No Opinion
9. How concerned are you about potential Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Plan changes?	3%	30%	58%	9%

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	In the Past
10. How often did you participate in or attend the following activities in the past 5 years?				
ASMFC Meetings	2%	10%	67%	21%
Zone council meetings	10%	20%	52%	18%
Fishermen's Forum	17%	24%	40%	19%
Comments on proposed rule	11%	25%	49%	15%

	<u>% of Respondents</u>
11. What is your preferred method of receiving information pertinent to the lobster fishery?	
Social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, X, Instagram)	17%
Attend meetings (e.g. zone council, LAC, ASMFC)	6%
Speaking with your District Representative on Zone Council	8%
Notifications via email	40%
Notifications via text	23%
Other	7%

	Significantly Higher	Somewhat Higher	About the Same	Somewhat Lower	Significantly Lower
12. Compared to 5 years ago, your net profits from lobstering are:	4%	12%	34%	30%	19%

	Very Optimistic	Somewhat Optimistic	Neutral	Somewhat Pessimistic	Very Pessimistic
13. How optimistic are you about the future of Maine's Lobster Industry?	17%	30%	26%	21%	6%

	Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Unsure	Probably Not	Definitely Not	NA
14. Do you expect the next generation of your family to enter the lobster industry?	17%	16%	20%	20%	18%	8%

For more information on this survey, please visit the Department website at, <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/fisheries/commercial/fisheries-by-species/lobsters/industry-survey>. Or you can access the Industry Survey Dashboard with the QR link below.

