

Appendix A: Recommendations

- 3.1 It is that more proactive efforts be taken to link economic planning activities by RED Boards with those of government development agencies. This will contribute to more complementary and achievable plans and priorities
- 3.2 It is recommended that efforts be strengthened to engage sub-zonal organizations in ongoing strategic planning activities. Ownership of the SEPs by sub-zonal groups must take place for the zonal process to work effectively.
- 3.3 It is recommended that stronger efforts be undertaken in the future to ensure that strategic planning and priority setting by RED Boards is supported by objective research and analysis related to regional economic capabilities and opportunities.
- 3.4 It is recommended that stronger efforts be undertaken to link the needs of RED Boards with research and planning capabilities in federal and provincial departments, Memorial University, and the College of the North Atlantic. The Department of Industry, Trade and Rural Development should take the lead in facilitating this effort.
- 3.5 It is recommended that DITRD commit to delivering the GeoStats system in a timely fashion to support ongoing strategic planning by RED Boards. The system should give full consideration to the needs of RED Boards with respect to matching market opportunities with regional capabilities.
- 3.6 It is recommended that future reviews of zonal strategic economic plans be integrated with the annual workplan process. This will ensure that strategic economic planning by RED Boards is a continuous and living process. SEP reviews should be guided by the following principles.
 - a) **Define a Vision.** An economic vision for the zone should be defined in clear, concrete terms that are supported by sub-zonal partners, the general public, and government. The vision should reflect real capabilities and opportunities. It should strive for a reasonable regional balance that reflects the most promising sectors for development in each sub-zonal area.
 - b) **Assess Regional Capabilities and Set Priorities.** Planning should always be based on a realistic assessment of regional and sub-regional capabilities and strengths. This exercise should engage government expertise and reviews of provincial economic policies and strategies. The outcome of this should be realistic assessment of what is possible for the zone and each of its parts. Based on this assessment, priorities should be established that identify the development opportunities with the highest economic potential.

- c) **Define Development Goals.** Goals in this context should reflect the best sector and sub-regional opportunities. They should be general statements of a desirable outcome for the proposed development. For example, 'enhanced aquaculture industry in Sub-Region A'; 'more profitable tourism industry in Sub-Region B'; 'increased manufacturing in Sub-Region C', etc. For each of these goals, further economic analysis is required to determine requirements and feasibility, and identify implementation partners.
 - d) **Detailed Planning.** Once the general feasibility of these goals is established, concrete objectives and targets should be set. These should be specific, measurable, realistic, and with achievable timeframes. For example, for Sub-Region A, an objective could be to develop cod grow-out farms. The targets for the RED Board and its partners in this initiative would include: (i) promotion of the opportunity, (ii) recruitment of entrepreneurs, (iii) hiring of technical expertise, (iv) development of a training plan, (v) site identification, (vi) facilitation of the regulatory process, (vii) financial planning, etc.
- 4.1 It is recommended that Boards undertake ongoing reviews of their composition, membership, and size. Boards should determine means to ensure that members represent active sub-zonal organizations with an interest and role in the Strategic Economic Plan. They should also review their size and operating procedures with an interest to maximize responsiveness and efficiency.
 - 4.2 It is recommended that the CEDA Management Committee set a clear, timely and transparent policy governing the approval of changes to board composition and membership
 - 4.3 It is recommended that, when Boards decide not to review their composition and membership, and when public policy goals for which the RED Board was established are not being reached, the CEDA Management Committee should be empowered to require such a review in the course of the annual renewal process.
 - 4.4 It is recommended that when boards decide that significant changes are required in their composition and membership, but these changes would be disruptive to the orderly and efficient operation of the board, they should be empowered to set composition and membership targets over a 1 to 2 year period and work toward the new arrangement as new board positions are filled.
 - 4.5 It is recommended that Boards establish clear lines of communication, authority, and accountability between the different organizational levels, i.e. Executive members, Board members, Executive Directors and other staff.

The entire board should be advised regularly of decisions made by sub-committees, including the Executive Committee.

- 4.6 It is recommended that the role of DITRD Economic Development Officers as advisors to RED Boards on organizational development be continued. Where necessary, EDOs should receive ongoing professional development support from their Department to increase their skills in this area
- 4.7 It is recommended that the recently initiated Community Capacity Building program for RED Boards be maintained. The program should be stepped up in the case of RED Boards that are having organizational problems.
- 4.8 It is recommended that the RED Boards give very serious consideration to establishing a pan-zonal lobby organization to represent their common interests at the provincial level.
- 4.9 It is recommended that RED Boards forge stronger networks of RED Board staff, government support staff, and business clients in particular economic sectors. This should include pan-provincial forums to address issues of mutual interest such as planning, technology transfer, business development, and market development. These forums would be designed around the theme of *Strategic Issues - A Sectoral Perspective*. There should be constant vigilance to ensure that the forums stay relatively narrow and do not begin to stray into much broader agendas.
- 4.10 It is recommended that discussions be reopened with Memorial University to request the establishment of graduate and undergraduate programs in regional economic development.
- 4.11 It is recommended that the idea of an Institute for Regional Economic Development be revisited. Its priorities should include curriculum research and development, certification of RED professionals based on training and experience, community education and awareness development, and youth education in regional economic development principles and practices
- 5.1 It is recommended that the existing Business Development Centres be invited to become more active partners of the RED Boards in the regional development process.
- 5.2 It is recommended that additional core monies be allocated in the next funding agreement to enable RED Boards to hire dedicated outreach staff. Their primary responsibility should be liaison and communications with sub-zonal organizations, and facilitation of sub-zonal initiatives that are in concert with the zonal SEPs. Funding levels should be commensurate with the needs

of each zone as determined by population, geography, the number of communities in each zone, and their performance in conducting outreach activities.

These outreach staff should also be responsible for more broad communications aimed at increasing community awareness and support for RED Board activities.

- 5.3 It is recommended that planning of economic development initiatives always incorporate appropriate strategies for implementation. This should address the development of implementation capacity within appropriate partner organizations, as well as anticipated timelines for handing off this responsibility to these partner organizations.
- 5.4 It is recommended that government funding agencies maintain a degree of flexibility in defining 'implementation', considering the degree of effort required to increase the capacity of sub-zonal organizations for this responsibility.
- 5.5 It is recommended that RED Boards lobby government for appropriate programming to provide long-term funding (i.e. maximum of three years) for the employment of staff specialists to provide business support in priority sectors identified in their strategic economic plans.
- 5.6 It is recommended that the core social development function of RED Boards be reviewed in the light of the new Strategic Social Plan. The objectives of this review should be to (i) clarify the importance of social development issues in the zonal process, (ii) assess the effectiveness of designated social seats as a mechanism as a means of representing social development needs, and (iii) determine if there are more effective ways to represent social development issues at the RED Board table.
- 5.7 It is recommended that sufficient monies be allocated as quickly as possible for the development and implementation of a communications strategy aimed at increasing public awareness and education of the RED Board process. Together with a stepped-up community outreach effort by RED Boards, this should help immensely in achieving the community support and buy-in originally envisioned.
- 5.8 It is recommended that each RED Board assign outreach staff (see Recommendation 5.2) to be responsible for building stronger public awareness and support at the community level for RED Board activities.
- 5.9 It is recommended that RED Boards become more outgoing in demanding and taking their share of the credit for successful initiatives. Likewise they should never make the mistake of failing to give credit wherever it is due. This is the true spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

- 5.10 The next funding agreement should include sufficient funds and flexibility to support special RED Board activities as justified by the SEPs and work plans.
- 6.1 It is recommended that the Provincial and Federal Governments immediately establish a high level Regional Economic Development Committee consisting of the senior people responsible for regional economic development. This committee should renew efforts to achieve more cohesive policies, awareness and support for the zonal process. Representation should include the Department of Industry, Trade and Rural Development, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Premier's Office, and Human Resources Development Canada, as well as other key departments responsible for economic development. The Committee should meet no less than monthly, and should maintain an open line of communications with the RED Boards.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the Provincial and Federal Governments establish working committees at the regional level to coordinate strategies and initiatives related to the zonal process. These committees should include DITRD Planners and Economic Development Officers, ACOA field officers, and key officials with other line departments
- 6.3 It is recommended that the RED Boards be more proactive in developing constructive relationships with federal and provincial politicians. This should be aimed at achieving more complementary efforts towards meaningful economic development.
- 6.4 It is recommended that future funding programs aimed at supporting regional economic development initiatives have stronger provisions to ensure worthwhile initiatives being led by RED Boards are funded.
- 6.5 It is recommended that the job responsibilities of EDOs be more clearly defined to emphasize a stronger developmental rather than regulatory focus.
- 6.6 It is recommended that DITRD provide professional development training to EDOs to enhance their regional development skills.
- 6.7 It is recommended that DITRD staff involved with RED Boards meet together at least annually to address issues and share information on best practices.
- 6.8 It is recommended that ACOA take a more proactive approach in its relationship with RED Boards. To the extent possible, this should include more frequent meetings, and assistance and feedback on RED Board funding proposals.

- 6.9 It is recommended that semi-annual reporting procedures be more open and frank about issues and problems. Even problems that have arisen and been solved should be referenced. Funding should never be delayed based on problems identified in these reports, unless these problems are especially severe.
- 6.10 Where possible, RED Boards and their government partners should implement Integrated Work Plans, which include government inputs and activities. This two-way reporting increases accountability and openness.
- 6.11 It is recommended that renewed efforts be directed to the development of MOUs as a mechanism for government-RED Board collaboration and partnership. MOUs should be based on solid analysis of capabilities and opportunities, and clear agreement on the roles and responsibilities of all partners.
- 6.12 It is recommended that RED Boards and government line departments take constructive measures to improve channels of communication, consultation, and collaboration.