

## Response to Letter from Kingsburg Coastal Conservancy Opposing Tidal Organics Lease 6046 Application

Tidal Organics Inc., a subsidiary of Scotia Garden Seafood Inc., is an established seaweed harvesting & processing company active in Nova Scotia since 1995. It is committed to responsible and ecologically sustainable harvesting of rockweed from all its provincial leases. It applies the precautionary approach to quota management considering the recognized value of rockweed as a habitat and its provision of ecological services.

The management of this lease is area-based, meaning the lease is managed in subunits, known as sectors, defined geographically by the NS Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture. The sectors range from 0.435 hectares to 5.148 hectares. Each sector was assessed for area coverage of rockweed using ground-truthing, aerial, and satellite photography. Direct sampling of the biomass was conducted using quadrat sampling along metered transects. Quotas are established for each of the sectors based on regrowth and accessibility to a maximum exploitation rate of 20% annually. These guidelines have been in place since 1989 in all rockweed leases of Nova Scotia.

The provision of 15-year leases for management of the rockweed resource permits the company to have long-term sustainable management plans. It is very much in its interest to carefully harvest the resource for both the benefit of the company and its responsibility for ecosystem sustainability. Short-term leases do not promote the development of long-term plans. This new application for lease 6046 is essentially a renewal of lease 6015, which Scotia Garden Seafood has held for the past 15 years in the same area.