



TBuck Suzuki Foundation

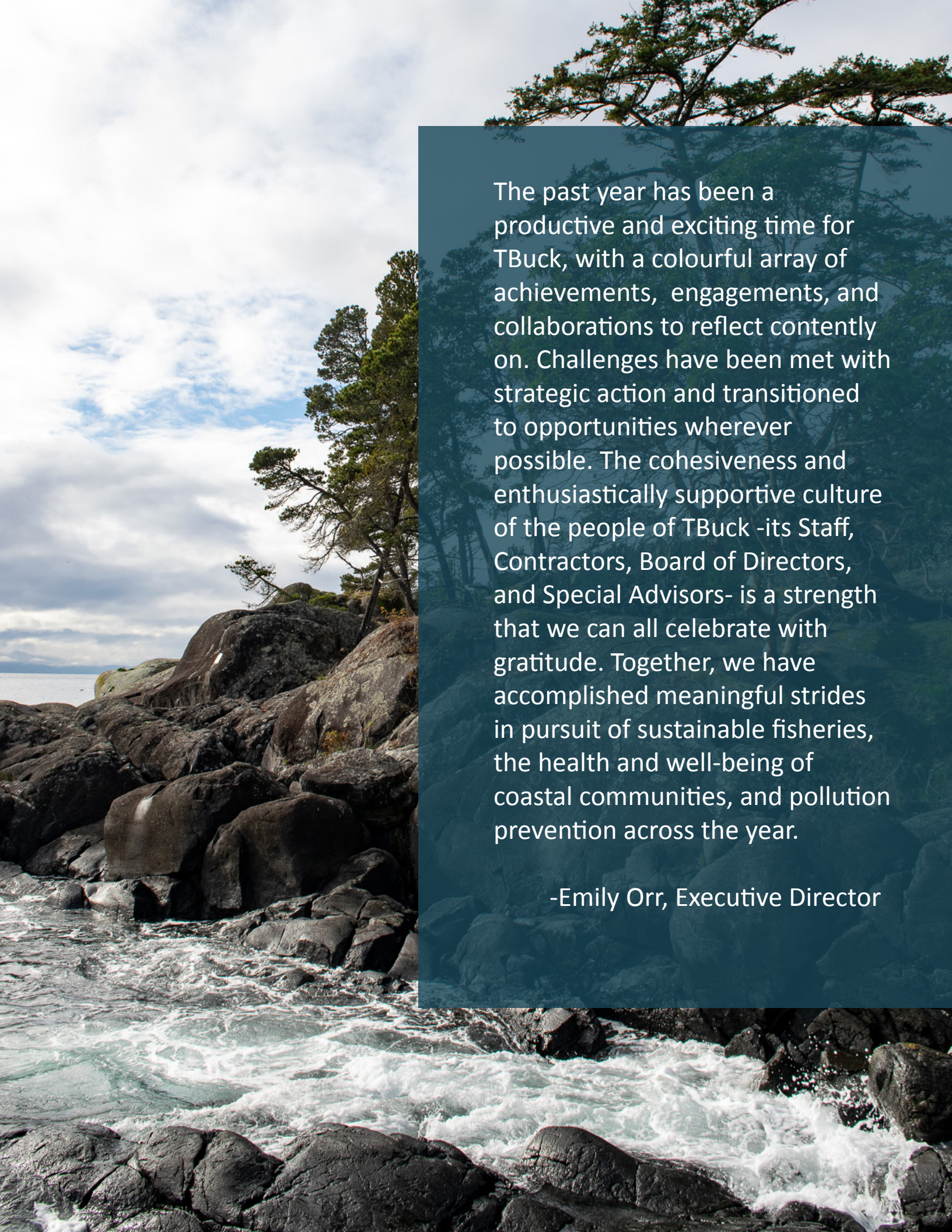
Annual Report 2024-2025



May 2025

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The past year has been a productive and exciting time for TBuck, with a colourful array of achievements, engagements, and collaborations to reflect contently on. Challenges have been met with strategic action and transitioned to opportunities wherever possible. The cohesiveness and enthusiastically supportive culture of the people of TBuck -its Staff, Contractors, Board of Directors, and Special Advisors- is a strength that we can all celebrate with gratitude. Together, we have accomplished meaningful strides in pursuit of sustainable fisheries, the health and well-being of coastal communities, and pollution prevention across the year.

-Emily Orr, Executive Director

TBuck Visioning Session



In October, TBuck staff, contractors, directors, and special advisors came together in Prince Rupert for a Strategic Planning Retreat. The gathering offered dedicated time to reflect on our current projects, assess where to grow or refine our efforts, and envision bold new directions for the future of the Foundation. Together, we revisited our mission and values, brainstormed new opportunities, and mapped out priorities for the year ahead. The retreat was both energizing and clarifying — a meaningful chance to reconnect with the heart of our work. We extend our deep gratitude to everyone who contributed their time and insight to this process



Salmon in Schools Program

TBuck has been collaborating on an exciting initiative in Prince Rupert to bring locally caught salmon into the School District 52 (SD52) lunch program. In partnership with Ecotrust Canada and Nadia Halward of SD52, the project will support the incorporation of salmon into the school lunch program for the upcoming school year.

This initiative advances several interrelated goals. It supports local harvesters by creating a reliable market for sustainably caught salmon and enhances regional food security through increased access to nutritious, locally sourced seafood. By incorporating salmon into school meals, the program introduces students to sustainable food systems and fosters an understanding of marine stewardship. It also aims to integrate

traditional Indigenous food practices into the school setting, strengthening cultural connections and honoring local knowledge. As the initiative grows, it aims to develop hands-on learning opportunities for students, including fish processing and preservation, further deepening the connection to local food systems and coastal traditions.



Ocean Acidification Monitoring Program

The Ocean Acidification Monitoring Program is a collaborative effort between the T Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, the UFAWU, the Hakai Institute, and Dakunalytics funded through the Tula Foundation. This initiative aims to monitor and understand the impacts of ocean acidification (OA) along British Columbia's coastline, particularly in under-sampled and data-poor regions. By leveraging the expertise of scientists and the unique positioning of commercial fishers, the program seeks to collect comprehensive data on oceanographic conditions to inform conservation and management strategies.

This project equips commercial harvesters with monitoring kits, enabling them to collect real-time ocean chemistry data while out on the water. This approach not only strengthens the scientific dataset on ocean acidification

but also empowers fishers to actively contribute to climate resilience research.

By early January 2025, all three monitoring kits were successfully deployed in the field. The project has made significant strides—sampling protocols have been refined, and we've gained valuable insight into how commercial harvesters can act as effective citizen scientists.

The Ocean Acidification Project reflects TBuck's commitment to climate action, collaborative science, and community stewardship. It also exemplifies how TBuck supports place-based solutions by partnering with those most closely connected to coastal ecosystems—local fishers.



Seafood Business Accelerator



On February 6th, we proudly celebrated the graduation of 14 inspiring entrepreneurs from communities across B.C. as they completed the second cohort of the Seafood Business Accelerator (SBA). This innovative program supports Indigenous seafood harvesters and small business owners in developing the skills, knowledge, and networks needed to capture more value from their harvests and strengthen local food systems.

This year's graduates shared exciting progress on diverse business ventures, from utilizing invasive green crab to commercializing traditional smokehouses. Their creative, community-driven ideas reflect the deep significance of seafood in First Nations communities and their commitment to providing healthy sustainable food for community members.

TBuck Board Member and SBA advisor Jon Crofts, along with our Executive Director Emily Orr, delivered congratulatory addresses. The celebration concluded with a culinary showcase featuring delicious seafood dishes, a fitting finale to a powerful program. We are proud to support the SBA alongside Coastal Nations Fisheries, New Relationship Trust, and Island Coastal Economic Trust. We can't wait to see where these entrepreneurs go next as they continue to make waves in the coastal food world.

Giving Voice



This year, TBuck continued supporting the Giving Voice speaker program, led by the Native Fishing Association, which brings Indigenous marine experts into West Coast university classrooms. The program offers students a rare opportunity to learn directly from Indigenous fish harvesters, shaping the future of coastal stewardship.

In 2024–25, Giving Voice expanded through a new partnership with UBC's First Nations and Indigenous Studies practicum program. Indigenous students Robert Burns and Annelie Wells contributed significantly: Annelie conducted interviews with professors and developed best practices for Indigenous-led classroom content, while Robert filmed interviews with Heiltsuk fishermen to build a growing archive of classroom materials. Additional interviews were captured on fishing vessels, and in-person talks by Brian Wadhams, James Lawson and Ray Harris brought Indigenous perspectives directly to marine science students at the University of Victoria.

Notably, for 54% of the students, this was their first time learning from Indigenous voices or commercial fishers, and 91% reported encountering new information—highlighting the continued gap in conventional marine science education. Giving Voice has strengthened connections between TBuck, Indigenous leadership, and local universities in alignment with TBuck's Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, and Mindfulness (EDIM) framework.

Fisheries for Communities

This year marked major progress for the Fisheries for Communities campaign, with growing recognition of Owner-Operator and fleet separation policies at both provincial and federal levels.

The release of the B.C. Coastal Marine Strategy (CMS) in July 2024 was a significant milestone. The Strategy reflected many of the priorities advanced by TBuck and our Fisheries for Communities partners during the consultation process—including pollution prevention, coastal health monitoring, ecosystem restoration, and the call for more inclusive, transparent governance. Notably, the CMS included a formal endorsement of Owner-Operator and fleet separation policies for the West Coast—an important step forward in provincial alignment with our campaign.

Momentum extended beyond the Strategy itself. In a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau, B.C. Premier David Eby publicly endorsed the adoption of Owner-Operator and fleet separation policies, further solidifying provincial support.

In May 2024, our Executive Director Emily Orr traveled to Ottawa alongside representatives from Ecotrust Canada and Coastal First Nations to promote the Owner-Operator License policy proposal. Their delegation brought first-hand insight into the urgent need for policy reform in the Pacific Region, offering concrete solutions and demonstrating strong allied support. Over four days, they held 19 meetings with key policymakers—building on the foundation of two FOPO reports, Premier Eby's endorsement, and our advocacy through the CMS process. In winter 2024, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) initiated an engagement process on West Coast Fisheries Modernization, an exploration of licensing reform and the potential application of Owner-Operator and fleet separation principles in Pacific fisheries. In response, Fisheries for Communities created and circulated a two-page briefing that summarized the campaign's goals and history, while also encouraging fish harvesters to participate in DFO's engagement sessions. As this momentum continues, we remain committed to advocating for a federal transition to Owner-Operator and fleet separation policies that will restore fairness, transparency, and community access to our coastal fisheries.



BC Young Fishermen's Network

This year the BCYFN spearheaded a successful sticker campaign, launched by BCYFN volunteers. The campaign was a creative way to highlight the presence and importance of fish harvesters in coastal communities, while raising funds for the BC Young Fishermen's Network. Stickers were sold directly on the docks, online, at seafood events, and through bulk orders with businesses like Finest at Sea Victoria and Redden Net, as well as several fishing associations. In total, nearly 900 stickers were sold, demonstrating strong grassroots support. Thanks to all of the fishing families and seafood lovers who supported us in this campaign!



Skeena Energy Monitoring Program

We are happy to have supported another year of the Skeena Energy Monitoring Program led by Luanne Roth. This project was started a decade ago with the mission to monitor the levels of fats contained in Skeena River sockeye. The annual Skeena sockeye run is a vital source of nutrition for the people and ecosystem along the Skeena river. Having an understanding of the fat content within sockeye on this river is an important indicator of salmon health. The data collected through this project show large annual variation in fat levels over the

last 10 years, possibly caused by high sea surface temperature and/or lowering ocean productivity. Volunteers are currently working on a paper to present this decade worth of important data.

Events and Outreach



Terra Madre -Slow Food Global Gathering

This year Executive Director Emily Orr was selected as a sponsored delegate to represent TBuck at Terra Madre, Slow Food's global gathering in Torino, Italy. As a Slow Food Canada leader, Emily participated in a dynamic exchange of knowledge, networks, and shared values with food and fishing advocates from around the world. At the Slow Food North America booth, she presented TBuck's work to an engaged international audience of commercial fishing colleagues. TBuck board member, Jon Crofts, also delivered a buoyantly-received lecture during one of the Slow Fish workshops. The event fostered meaningful relationships with Slow Food and Slow Fish partners. The connections formed and perspectives gained at Terra Madre will continue to inform and energize TBuck's work in the years ahead.

Seafood Festival Outreach

Over the past year, TBuck had the opportunity to join seafood festivals across the coast. We hosted booths at Prince Rupert's Seafest, the West Coast Seafood Festival, and the False Creek Crab Fest in Vancouver. We also supported the new Victoria Crab Fest with informational materials to help promote TBuck's work and sustainable seafood messaging. These events were a great opportunity to connect with seafood consumers and educate about the amazing local fisheries on our coast.



Salmon Recovery & Resilience Conference

In December 2024, staff member, Hannah Fiegenbaum, attended the BC Salmon Recovery & Resilience Conference at the Vancouver Convention Centre — West, connecting with over 400 participants focused on salmon conservation and habitat restoration. This conference was an amazing opportunity to connect with organizations entrenched in salmon habitat restoration and a good way to get an understanding of future ways that TBuck can support salmon.

UBC Guest Lecture

In January, our Executive Director Emily Orr was invited to deliver a guest lecture at the Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries at UBC. She spoke about TBuck's work and how the organization integrates hands-on fishing experience into its approach to marine planning and fishery advocacy. With years of experience both on the water and as a shore-based advocate, Emily brought a valuable perspective that was enthusiastically received by students and faculty. It was an honour to be invited and a meaningful opportunity to share the voice of active fish harvesters in academic spaces.





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