



The years ahead will bring dramatic, unprecedented change to Maine's island and coastal communities. Warming waters, ocean acidification, and sea level rise threaten our fisheries and our way of life. Our communities are particularly vulnerable because we are heavily dependent upon a single species: the American lobster.

For the moment, our lobster fishery is booming, affording us the opportunity to adapt and diversify before we face an acute crisis. New opportunities, through improved broadband, aquaculture, and more, can strengthen marine livelihoods and allow entirely new ways of earning a living along the coast and on the islands. And Maine's heritage is one that values hard work and determination. We're ready to roll up our sleeves.

A community-based approach is the foundation of all our work at the Island Institute. In 2013, we engaged over 500 local residents, partner organizations, and community stakeholders in our most recent strategic planning process.

Participants articulated priorities that are now guiding our work: strong economies, education and leadership, and sharing solutions between communities. They also

helped us learn about a wealth of possible solutions to their shared challenges.

Based on this input, the Island Institute board of trustees adopted a set of 6-year goals and objectives in July 2013. Recognizing progress from 2013 through 2016, the board adopted the following refined goals and objectives in early 2017, which will guide our work through 2020.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Strengthen Community Economies

Goal 1: Diverse Livelihoods – Our goal is that the economies of Maine's island and coastal communities will be more stable and diverse by 2025 so that they can weather an uncertain future.

- Profitability is increased and incomes are stabilized from the small businesses of all types that comprise our local economies, including lobster-related businesses.
- Incomes from kelp and shellfish aquaculture grow.
- Broadband service is available at speeds that meet or exceed the national average.

Goal 2: Sustainable, Affordable Energy – Our goal is that Maine's island and coastal community energy systems are safe, reliable, and sustainable by 2025.

- Household energy costs decrease relative to the national average.
- Communities move toward more sustainable, reliable, locally-sourced energy for home heating, electricity, transportation, and other needs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Enhance education and leadership for the future

Goal 3: Effective Education – Our goal is that Maine's island and coastal students define and achieve their educational and career goals and that our schools lead as models of excellence in public education.

- Students graduate from high school ready for either college or a career.
- Post-secondary attendance and completion rates increase.

Goal 4: Effective Local Leadership – Our goal is that Maine's island and coastal communities have local leaders who confidently guide and plan for the future.

- Current and future leaders increase their knowledge and confidence, and gain the skills and networks they need for their roles.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Deliver and share solutions for sustaining communities

Goal 5: Accelerated Community Sustainability – Our goal is that leaders in Maine’s island and coastal communities can move more quickly toward effective solutions to local challenges.

- Community members contribute to and benefit from inspirational, entertaining, and practical information about their communities shared through print and digital platforms, including *The Working Waterfront* news and the *Island Journal*.
- Community members have opportunities to meet with each other, and with topic experts, government decision-makers and people from communities elsewhere, in person and virtually, to discuss common challenges and share what’s working.
- Community members have access to the data, analyses, and technical assistance they need for local decision-making, planning, and projects.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Strengthen and support a culture of workplace excellence that is responsive to our constituents

Goal 6: Island Institute board and staff work effectively together with each other and partners to meet community needs.

- We effectively allocate the organization’s resources to address the most urgent needs of island communities, especially the smallest communities.
- Our staff spend as much time as possible on islands building and maintaining relationships, and listening for issues and concerns that will inform our work going forward.
- Unrestricted financial support is increased so that the organization is not overly dependent on restricted revenue, and a development plan is implemented that funds the organization’s strategic priorities.
- The organization’s physical plant and technology infrastructure enhance collegiality, productivity, and staff well-being.
- Our public relations and communications effectively share our mission and accomplishments with a broader, diverse audience.



CORE ONGOING PROGRAMMING

The Island Institute continues to run important ongoing programs that are central to our mission, and that are oriented toward our strategic priorities as they change over time.

- **Island Fellows:** Fellows provide an extra set of skilled hands in communities to work on emerging priorities, while receiving professional development and creating strong connections in Maine.
- **Archipelago:** Our store provides a Main Street venue selling Maine arts and crafts, and supports island and coastal artists with professional development and networking.

