



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

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Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

MAR 28 2011

Chief Ken Malloway
info@frafs.ca

Dear Chief Malloway:

RE: ISSUES RAISED BY THE FIRST NATIONS FORUM PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for your recent response of March 10th, 2011 to my previous correspondence. While I will respond to these issues below, I would like to emphasize that in-depth resolution to these issues will require ongoing collaboration and discussion through a variety of processes that engage First Nations, DFO and in some cases, other parties, including non-aboriginal harvesters.

Regarding the IFMP process and related consultation, while we acknowledge that DFO leads and holds ultimate responsibility for this process, we do not believe that unilateral actions by DFO are sufficient to achieve the desired improvements to First Nation's engagement in the IFMP or other process related to management of resources. For this reason, we continue to believe that collaborative processes such as the Fraser Roadmap Planning Group and the DFO-First Nations Fisheries Council Co-Management Working Group have a role to play in terms of suggesting and exploring broad options and opportunities for improvement.

Further, we do acknowledge that feedback on these processes needs input from First Nations organizations acting at a variety of levels. In that context, I appreciate your suggestion to engage a Joint Technical Working Group under the auspices of FRAFS. I will ask my staff to follow-up with you regarding your views on the specific role this group might undertake related to the IFMP process.

Regarding the various concerns related to early-timed stocks of Fraser Chinook, DFO acknowledges the significance of these stocks to participants in the Fraser River Forum process. The 2010 IFMP objective for Fraser Spring 4₂ Chinook is to conserve these populations by continuing to minimize incidental harvests in Canadian oceans fisheries and also to minimize directed harvest in the Fraser River prior to July 15th. Many of the recommendations provided by First Nations prior to the 2010 fishing season were considered in the development of management actions implemented in the 2010 season for both marine and freshwater recreational and commercial fisheries. I understand that

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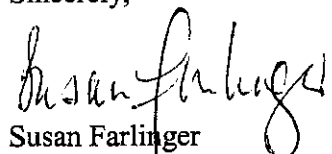
preliminary 2010 information has already discussed and that final 2010 results can be expected in mid-April, at which time the Departmental staff will provide this information to First Nation Forum participants. A discussion regarding the availability and timing of data to support discussions for key stocks and species of concern, such as Fraser spring 4₂ Chinook, would also be an example of a topic the Joint Fraser Technical Working Group may want to prioritize.

Regarding catch monitoring, the *DFO Strategic Framework for Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting* was presented during the November 2010 Forum Workshop on Catch Monitoring in a draft form. The Department continues to be interested in further discussion with First Nations on this framework and looks forward to an opportunity to discuss this further. In relation to the desire for more First Nation involvement in monitoring recreational fisheries as I indicated in my letter from February 22, 2011, the Department is interested in exploring additional opportunities for improved collaboration with First Nations and stakeholders in the delivery of these programs.

Regarding Aboriginal fishing for food, social and ceremonial (FSC) purposes, I agree that the Roadmap process does not have the authority or mandate to quantify FSC needs. I understand that these discussions can be contentious and will require bilateral discussions with First Nations. However, I encourage ongoing discussions through the Fraser Forum processes, and other collaborative processes involving First Nations and DFO on how best to identify and discuss issues related to FSC and how FSC objectives could be better met within existing or emerging fisheries planning and management processes.

In summary, the Department is committed to working with First Nations to address important concerns raised in your letters of March 10 and February 2, 2011. I recognize the complexity of some issues and that progress will require ongoing dialogue between DFO and Forum participants, as well as First Nations and stakeholders outside of this process. However, it is my belief that these processes have a positive benefit for both First Nations and DFO. To that end, I encourage you to continue to raise, discuss and explore collaborative solutions to these issues within the various Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 processes in which you are engaged.

Sincerely,


Susan Farlinger
Regional Director General

cc: Claire Dansereau