

Meeting Notes

BC First Nations/DFO Aquaculture Management

June 17, 2009

Anchor Inn

Campbell River BC

- Introductions
- DFO AMD presentation
- Question/comments/concerns - dialogue
 - First Nations concerned: that they are being involved too late in process; that the waters are sick; with lack of trust; about lack of serious consideration of Traditional Knowledge; that no one listens to the concerns and requests that have been previously stated, regarding sea lice, night lights, copper dipped nets; that First Nations are not being recognized.
 - Fisheries Act, regulations and policies need to be enforced. Do not feel that they have been.
 - DFO needs to focus on management of the resource/environment not the industry.
 - Need to come to each territory. Can not speak on another's behalf. Have no say in another territory. Do not lump us together. Bring the people who can answer the questions.
 - Words such as "seamless transition to province" means that improvements will not be made – business as usual – this is not acceptable.
 - The development of a new regulation has potential to infringe therefore there is a duty to consult and accommodate. Will infringe on food and medicinal foods.
 - Addition of another licence will result in a duty to consult.
 - First Nations Fisheries Council Action Plan has proposal on how to include First Nations.
 - Is this discussion government to government? Want to meet Government to Government.
 - DFO – developing framework. BC gov will still have responsibility for leases. Trying to address aspects that were struck down. Industry is not first in DFO's mandate.
 - What weight do First Nations have in the process in comparison to industry and ENGOS? What weight does the AAA carry? DFO – has not thought about the weighting of comments received.
 - Recommendation – slide 6 change order – when creating conditions for a successful industry is listed first this means that it is more important than environment.
 - What will FN role be in management? First Nations need to be part of a management plan. Want to work with other First Nations and Governments. Work together to define path forward. Would like to be

involved with co-management. FN and Gov need to find a way to work together. Want to work with you. It must be meaningful.

- Should have begun consulting prior to any fish farms entered water.
- Redesign current system – create a new framework – allow for inclusion of existing conditions. Delegation to Province does not equate to new business.
- Who defines “success” and “protected” – asked in reference to slides?
- Sustainable economy – commercial fishery – fishers can no longer pass on their traditions.
- DFO – If a new federal licence was developed it would allow for the types of conditions that are included in those that were struck down. Definition of success ranges from no industry to an environmentally and economically sustainable industry.
- We are pro wild salmon, not anti aquaculture. Would take issue with any industry that impacts wild fish.
- Want to share in the decision making.
- Want government to respect the area that want and do not want aquaculture.
- There has been no compensation for what DFO has cost First Nations with respect to fish, shellfish and ducks.
- Want a sustainable aquaculture industry. Interested in shellfish farming. Government is trying to figure out how to accommodate people instead of how to manage resources.
- BC government – land lord piece will stay with the provincial government; First Nation consultation piece will hopefully get better; prov/fed govs need to be cooperating; goal is a sustainable environment and industry; currently no mandate.
- Ahousaht wants to be involved – extending a formal invitation to Trevor Swerdfager to come to territory.
- Don't believe DFO science – look at history – decline of wild fish (herring, cod, salmon). Discrepancy in number of returns.
- Chinook have decline since fish farms have been installed.
- Want it to work for both FN and government.
- Need capacity dollars. First Nations need to be resourced properly and adequately.
- Need to be able to change the licences in response to new science – issue them on an annual basis.
- Find commonalities between the FNFC action plan and the wild salmon policy.
- Need to know the carrying capacity of each region – 6 regions.
- Want gut analysis of fish farm fish.
- Fish farms are here so it is about how First Nations want it to be managed.
- Farms in the Broughton have not moved but expanded – this is not sustainable management.
- Recommend treating fish farms like commercial fishers – if commercial fisher fishes without a licence then they lose their boat.

- Lack of monitoring. Need to have on farm monitors (like commercial fisheries) – must be a First Nations approved person.
- Management must start from the bottom and work up.
- Would like an opportunity to look at what they like/don't like about the BC regs and to compare it with the Wild Salmon Policy.
- Demand respect/acknowledgement of the Chiefs – in order to do that you must give them something. Industry recognizes that.
- First Nations need to meet to discuss how they would like to be involved and will come back to government after that. All 200+ First Nations need to be invited to 2 day forum. Need to hold it asap. First Nations need to discuss timelines – may have to accept something we don't want for a short time. Then DFO come to territories. Need to have technicians at meetings to address technical issues.
- Need an official recorder at meetings.
- How will DFO respond to our concerns?
- DFO – primary goal is to protect marine ecosystems, desire to have a meeting soon – have heard the request for DFO to come to the territories. Vancouver meeting echoed concerns for wild fish. Acknowledges invitation to Ahousat and Clayoquot.
- BC government – funding will have to be joint BC/DFO to facilitate meetings. Governments need to be harmonized for better environmental protection
- First Nations will work collectively – want communication to occur prior to the development of a draft. Do not bring a plan to them.