

Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture Committee Working Group (PFAC-WG) Meeting

March 11, 2005

DFO Meeting Notes

BC MAFF – Bud Graham, Al Castledine, Jamie Alley, Larry Neilson
BC MWLAP – Alec Dale, Bruce Morgan
DFO Pacific – Mary Hobbs, Alanna Laplante, Sue Farlinger, Don Radford, Ron Kadowaki, Allison Webb, Ed Woo
DFO NHQ – Linda MacMillan, Kim Darling, Élise Lavigne

1. Welcome / Introductions

- purpose of PCFAM to strengthen and support cooperation and collaboration between governments on Pacific fisheries issues
- focus is on daily interactions to improve partnering arrangements
- all expressed interest in developing a more structured approach to work and a more rigorous set of timelines for meetings so the PCFAM and its committees can function as they were originally envisioned in the agreement and terms of reference

2. Debrief on PCFAM meeting of December 17, 2004

- no questions were noted

3. Update on Wild Salmon Policy – Mary Hobbs

- DFO provided BC officials with a brief update of the status of the Wild Salmon Policy consultations, including themes from major stakeholders and First Nations.
- NEXT STEPS:
 - DFO committed to communicating advice to stakeholders and is developing a format to meet this commitment; DFO noted that the full report from the Wild Salmon Policy Forum will be available on the public website in a couple of weeks
 - DFO will review all information received and determine how stakeholder input and advice will be used in the next draft of the Wild Salmon Policy; the revised draft of the Wild Salmon Policy will be released on May 31, 2005
- BC expressed concerns about stakeholder references to the BC Wild Steelhead Policy and the effects of aquaculture on wild salmon habitat; it is felt that the matrix used by the BC Auditor General would be more appropriate.

DECISIONS:

- **DFO will provide BC with a summary of the feedback received to date so that BC officials can develop a response to stakeholder advice on how areas of provincial jurisdiction can be linked to the Wild Salmon Policy.**
- **DFO will request Wild Salmon Policy drafters provide a more balanced reference to habitat impacts that does not focus on just aquaculture**

4. Review / Discussion of Joint Workplan

Salmon Aquaculture Forum – Jamie Alley

- BC provided an update on the status of the Pacific Salmon Forum (PSF).

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- John Fraser has resigned from the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council (PFRCC), effective April 1, 2005 in order to focus on the PSF. The head office will be in Nanaimo. Pam Parker is the Executive Director and Theresa Ryan is the Vice Chair.
- The PSF will have a \$5M budget over three years: \$1M for administration will be provided through an administrative grant from the Province and \$4M for research will be held in a trust fund administered by the Vancouver Foundation.
- BC's Premier's Office wants to ensure the PSF remains objective and, therefore, BC MAFF is no longer involved in the set up or operations of the PSF.
- The PSF has met to develop its strategic priorities and workplan. Developing a relationship with DFO is a priority.
- BC indicated that the PSF expressed an interest in developing the federal-provincial relationship and is expected to engage the PCFAM to further work on collaborative and cooperative issues.
- DFO indicated that no decision has been made on the future of the PFRCC. The new context for Pacific fisheries management (JTG, WSP, SARA) must be considered before any decision is made. The PFRCC has been instructed to continue developing its workplan for 2005-06.

DECISIONS:

- **Remove item from joint workplan.**
- **DFO will provide BC with their key priorities for research and development in the next 5 years, especially with respect to shared vision for aquaculture and including habitat management, to ensure gaps related to research are identified.**

Joint Task Group (Pearse-McRae) Report and First Nations Panel Report – Ron Kadowaki

- DFO provided a summary of the key issues that were raised during consultations and updated BC officials on proposal to use a phased approach to implementation of the recommendations in order to gain support and address outstanding operational issues.
 - ITQs are controversial, especially within the commercial fleets and First Nations (as they may limit access for commercial and food/social/ceremonial purposes)
 - How licences will be valued is of great concern to many sectors as Sockeye Equivalents will not fairly compensate all licences transferred to First Nations.
- BC indicated that they will be providing specific comments on phased approach the week of March 14. The key issue remains whether the proposed approach goes far enough in addressing their need for certainty with respect to the non-Aboriginal commercial fleet's share of the TAC.
- Given the timing of the upcoming decisions, it was noted that the PCFAM will not be the forum for addressing this issue.

DECISION:

- **Carry over as update and information item on revised joint workplan.**

Species-at-Risk – Bruce Morgan and Mary Hobbs

- BC MWLAP provided an overview of the draft bilateral agreement and indicated that it is now in the federal approval process.

- All parties acknowledged the excellent work done to complete the draft and agreed that it was an excellent example of a collaborative mechanism to deal with shared public policy issues.
- BC is working to develop a single perspective on the next suite of listings that have been recommended by COSEWIC.
- BC indicated that a compelling argument can be made to separate Lower Fraser River sturgeon from the other populations noted and that BC MWLAP and BC MAFF are finalising a letter to MoE and MFO proposing a strategy for maximising the potential for recovery without hampering stewardship efforts.
- DFO indicated that the deadline for coho and bocaccio (Gazette 1) is July or August 2005. The deadline for sturgeon is January 2006.

DECISIONS:

- **Remove item from joint workplan once bilateral is signed.**
- **DFO will distribute the economic impact report when it is finalised.**

Aquaculture – Allison Webb

- DFO gave an update on the status of the five Letters of Understanding being negotiated between BC and Canada:
 1. Fish Health Management Plans – signed by DFO and BC MAFF; effective model.
 2. Harmonised Consultation Process with respect to First Nations – in the *Homalco* decision, the court directed further consultations; all governments have agreed to get the referral process finalised by late March or early April.
 3. Aquaculture Waste Management (benthic standards) – DFO has been working with BC MAFF and BC MWLAP to implement a consistent and harmonised approach to sharing data; DFO stressed that it needs industry's data in order to do field studies and meet deadlines; draft is with MWLAP.
 4. Management of Increased Production on Existing Sites – DFO, TC, BC MAFF, and BC MWLAP are working in collaboration; comments on draft are due by June 7
 5. Compliance and Enforcement – this is the final piece in the integrated management plan; there have been initial meetings but no draft has been developed; no provincial designate has been appointed yet; DFO and BC MWLAP are conducting joint inspections and will need to work together.
- DFO noted that all elements of the BC model also fit into the broader umbrella of the Aquaculture Framework Agreement (AFA) being developed through the national CCFAM Aquaculture Task Group.
- BC requested further information about the funding breakdown for the National Aquatic Animal Health Program (NAAHP). When informed that no further details were available, BC stressed that they need to be notified as soon as possible about proposed workplans and expenditure plans.
- BC indicated that they had a very effective existing fish health database that is likely to be of great benefit in implementing the NAAHP.

DECISION:

- **DFO committed to following up with BC on NAAHP as soon as further details are known.**

- **DFO noted that effective April 1, 2005, aquaculture in Pacific Region will be part of Fisheries and Aquaculture Management, as it is nationally.**

Steelhead Protocol – Don Radford

- DFO indicated that the Steelhead Protocol is complete and in place. The Protocol outlines a process for pre-season planning and post-season assessment.
- The issue about tying in-season abundance to management planning is included in the protocol and progress is being made.
- BC indicated that the Living Rivers Trust project will include funding for Thompson steelhead rehabilitation work. Funding is expected late March or early April 2005.

DECISIONS:

- **Remove item from joint workplan. In-season issues will be raised as needed.**
- **BC will provide DFO with an advanced copy of the Nicola Water Planning document.**

Auditors General Reports on Salmon (NB/BC/CESD)

- BC noted that the *Homalco* decision supported BC MAFF's "precautionary approach" as the appropriate model for moving forward with decision-making in the absence of full scientific knowledge.
- There may be an opportunity to develop a shared vision for wild salmon.
- BC suggested a joint review process to try to better coordinate government responses to these sorts of reports

DECISIONS:

- **DFO will provide BC with its response to the CESD report when it is available.**
- **DFO and BC MAFF will discuss developing a shared vision for wild salmon.**

European Union Enforcement of 1kilogram limit for sport caught fish

- DFO provided a summary of the status of this item.
- BC indicated that they feel very positive about the progress so far and are hopeful of an expedient resolution.

DECISIONS:

- **Carry over as update and information item on revised joint workplan.**

MOU with respect to Implementing Canada's Oceans Strategy in the Pacific

- The status of the subsidiary agreement on Marine Protected Areas was discussed. DFO and BC indicated that the negotiating table has agreed to the content and the document should be ready for signature. DFO DM has indicated that he anticipates ministerial sign off. BC indicated that it will raise the issue at the deputy minister-level conference call on March 18.
- The subsidiary agreements on Marine Protected Areas, Coastal Planning, and Information Management are considered the next priorities.

DECISIONS:

- **Carry over as update and information item on revised joint workplan.**

Environmental Process Modernization Plan (EPMP)

- DFO provided an update on the agriculture RMF.
- DFO indicated that most low risk activities are complete and work needs to begin on the medium and high risk areas (such as removal of wetlands); this includes setting out the pathways of effect and the decision-making framework so that a workplan can be developed and delivered for these medium and high risk activities; looking at habitat sensitivity and mitigation decisions in order to codify
- will include mostly DFO and BC MAFF

DECISIONS:

- **Carry over as item on revised joint workplan.**

Fisheries Act Authorization with respect to Placer Mining

- Letter from DFO to YK Minister of Environment, providing detailed update, has been sent.
- DFO will be briefing BC Ministries on March 17.

DECISIONS:

- **Carry over as item on revised joint workplan.**

MOU on Freshwater Fish Habitat Administration with the Yukon

- It is expected that discussions on the MOU will recommence in April 2005, when the Placer mining regime is fully implemented.

DECISIONS:

- **Carry over as item on revised joint workplan.**

5. PFAC-WG structure / BC proposal for creation of sub-committees

PFAC structure and meeting schedule – Élise Lavigne

- The process proposed by BC is consistent with DFO's vision for PCFAM.
- DFO indicated that there is a gap between PFAC and the PFAC-WG.
- CCFAM and ACFAM have developed a formal, structured meeting schedule for ministers, deputy ministers, and working group members. It would be useful to develop a similar schedule for the PCFAM and its committees.
- There is a need to ensure YK is included in all meetings so that their issues are properly linked into the workplan and reflected in discussions.
- Ministers make decisions based on policy and priority issues recommended by the deputy minister-level committee. As such, the PFAC-WG is able to focus on operational issues.
- The PFAC-WG needs to set key priorities with achievable timelines; a clear workplan will help provide more rigour and formality to the structure.

- BC indicated that they would like to standardise when PCFAM and its committees meet to set a stable target for deadlines

Review of "Potential Working Group Sub-Committees" – Jamie Alley

- All agreed that the proposed structure is useful and will help clarify the key areas where work should be undertaken.
- Four working groups were proposed and tentative leads assigned. Sub-groups, with tentative leads, were also discussed.
 - i. Fisheries Management, including modernisation of the Canada-BC Enforcement sub-agreement (DFO – Don Radford / BC MAFF – Jamie Alley / YK – Don Toews)
 - ii. Aquaculture (DFO – Allison Webb (to be confirmed) / BC MAFF – Al Castledine YK – Don Toews)
 - iii. Oceans (DFO – Sue Farlinger / BC MAFF – Jamie Alley)
 1. Marine Protected Areas (DFO – Sue Farlinger / BC MSRM – Joyce Beaudry)
 2. Information Management (DFO – Dick Carson / BC MAFF – Dave Traedger)
 3. Coastal Planning (DFO – Ed Woo / BC MSRM – Rob Paynter)
 4. State of the Oceans and Indicators (DFO – Sue Farlinger / BC MWLAP – Linda Gilkeson and Alec Dale)
 - iv. Aquatic Habitat, including land- and water-use management and modernisation of the Canada-BC Habitat Management sub-agreement (DFO – Sue Farlinger / BC MWLAP – Bruce Morgan / YK – Don Toews)
 1. Environmental Process Modernisation Plan (DFO – Bonnie Antcliffe / BC MWLAP – Rod Davis)
 2. Planning, Restoration and Stewardship (DFO – Ed Woo / BC MWLAP – Alan Moyes)
- Working group and sub-group leads will be asked to develop a mandate, key objectives, and draft workplans by the week of May 2, 2005. They will also be asked to make recommendations on key issues and priorities.
- DFO will distribute a revised "CCFAM template" to assist working groups in developing their workplans.

6. Additions to Joint Workplan

- YK/BC MOU on Border Water Management – Bruce Morgan will follow up with Don Toews to determine the nature of the item.
- Due to the changes in provincial and federal approaches to enforcement, the PFAC-WG will need a detailed briefing before making a recommendation to deputy ministers or ministers.

7. Additional items

- a. PCFAM meeting schedule – Élise Lavigne will develop proposed dates. BC indicated a preference for September 2005. BC also indicated that spring and fall PCFAM meeting dates are preferred.
- b. The next PFAC-WG meeting is scheduled first week of May 2005 in Vancouver.