

Interview Questions on DFO's Wild Salmon Management

Over recent decades, the management of Pacific salmon has become more challenging due to Supreme Court decisions, new international agreements (e.g., UN Convention on Biological Diversity and renewal of the Pacific Salmon Treaty) new legislation (Oceans and Species at Risk acts), climate change, habitat loss, shifts in global seafood markets, and altered public expectations around conservation of wild stocks. In 1998 Fisheries and Oceans Canada set out a *New Direction* for Pacific salmon management in response to these challenges and growing public concern for effective conservation of wild salmon. The *New Direction* was guided by twelve principles grouped under three key themes: conservation, sustainable use, and improved decision making. As part of the *New Direction*, the Department also committed to developing an operational policy for the management of wild salmon.

The Wild Salmon Policy (WSP) was adopted in 2005 after five years (1999-2005) of extensive consultations with First Nations, fisheries stakeholders, and environmental groups. The WSP describes how DFO will meet its responsibilities for the conservation of wild Pacific salmon. It stipulates overall policy goals for wild salmon, identifies basic principles to guide resource management decision-making, and sets out objectives and strategies to achieve the goal. The goal of the WSP is “*to restore and maintain healthy and diverse salmon populations and their habitats for the benefit and enjoyment of Canadians in perpetuity.*” The goal is advanced by promoting the following principles: conservation of wild salmon and their habitat as the highest priority for decision-making, honour Canada’s obligations to First Nations, consider biological, social, and economic consequences, and seek meaningful public input.

The WSP also requires the Department to conduct an independent review of the success of the policy in achieving its broad goals and objectives within five years of its adoption. In preparation for the WSP five-year review, the Policy Branch is conducting interviews with DFO staff to uncover the ways in which the intent of the WSP has influenced and been incorporated into the Department’s business and culture. To facilitate input, eight questions have been developed and are listed below.

1. How does conservation¹ of wild salmon and their habitat guide your decision-making? Please describe how this is different from five years ago.
2. Has introduction of the WSP altered your engagement with First Nations regarding wild salmon management over the past five years? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. What, if any, new practices have you adopted since 2005 to ensure that the principle of sustainable use² is reflected in your decisions regarding the

¹ Conservation is defined in the WSP as the protection, maintenance, and rehabilitation of genetic diversity, species, and ecosystems to sustain biodiversity and the continuance of evolutionary and natural production processes.

- management of wild salmon or their habitat?
4. Would you please provide examples about how you ensure decisions regarding wild salmon are made in an open, transparent and inclusive manner? (e.g., partnerships, processes, etc.).
 5. How you are working towards achieving each of the objectives³ of the WSP?
 6. What are the key barriers that you have encountered in implementing WSP principles and objectives?
 7. Please identify one or two key priorities and/or opportunities for moving forward with WSP implementation?
 8. What key questions should be addressed by an independent review of the WSP ?

² Sustainable use is defined in the WSP as the use of resources in a way and at a rate that does not lead to their long-term decline, thereby maintaining the potential for future generations to meet their needs and aspirations.

³ WSP Objectives: 1. Safeguard the genetic diversity of wild Pacific salmon. 2. Maintain habitat and ecosystem integrity. 3. Manage fisheries for sustainable benefits.