

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS COMMITTEE

DISCUSSION PAPER

Security Classification:

Title: Update and Strategic Approach to Implementation of WSP Strategy 4

Issue:

Strategy 4 of the Wild Salmon Policy (WSP) calls for the development of long-term strategic plans for conservation units (CUs) and groups of CUs and their habitat subject to common risk factors. SDC advice regarding a more structured and strategic approach to Strategy 4 will help focus and advance this work, given the current context (e.g. Cohen Commission, resource constraints, potential recommendations for listing of salmon species under *Species at Risk Act*).

Background:

- Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon (WSP) was announced in 2005 after five years of extensive consultation.
- In addition to identifying overarching goals, principles and objectives with respect with respect to Pacific salmon, WSP includes a number of strategies aimed at meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the Policy.
- Strategy 4 calls for the development of integrated strategic plans for CUs and groups of CUs and their habitat, subject to common risk factors, including two action steps:
 - Action Step 4.1: Implement interim process for priority CUs.
 - Action Step 4.2: Design and implement a fully integrated strategic planning process for salmon conservation.
- Under WSP, integrated strategic plans would incorporate biological information under Strategies 1-3 with socio-economic considerations, and identify:
 - Long-term biological targets for CU's and groups of CUs
 - Recommended resource management actions to protect or restore salmon, their habitat and ecosystems to achieve targets; and
 - Timeframes and priorities for action
- A number of integrated planning processes are underway under Strategy 4, including the Barkley Sound Pilot, watershed-based processes in the Skeena and Cowichan, and the Fraser River Sockeye Spawning Initiative (FRSSI).
- Some foundational work has also been completed including a number of papers and significant internal (DFO) and external engagement around integrated strategic planning.
- In June 2009, an OPS discussion focused on the identification of planning units (aggregations of CUs) for planning purposes and the identification of high-priority CUs.
- The outcome was general support for the proposed approach to planning units while recognizing the need for some flexibility to plan at different scales depending on various factors (e.g. existing planning processes, nature of the conservation concern, etc.). Next steps were identified including: i) FAM to develop principles to guide the identification

of planning units; and ii) FAM/Science to work on a “rapid assessment” of CUs to determine potential high priority CUs.

Current Status:

- Work on Strategy 4 and the WSP planning pilots is progressing, including a “synoptic assessment” underway within Science that would provide the biological foundation for determining high-priority CUs.
- However, a number of gaps and challenges have been identified related to progress under Strategy 4, including limited resources, internal coordination and governance, and clarity regarding DFO’s role and objectives with respect to integrated strategic plans.
- The strategic context around Strategy 4 has also shifted since the last engagement of SDC/OPS in June 2009 (e.g. Cohen Commission, Strategic Review).
- In that context, it is felt that advice from SDC regarding a number of key issues and the overall strategic approach to Strategy 4 would help focus and advance this work over the short, medium and long-term.
- In addition to advice on next steps, key discussion questions include:
 - Is there support for identifying high “priority CUs” as envisioned under Action Step 4.1 and the proposed longer-term approach?
 - How prescriptive should DFO be in terms of: the content and format for integrated strategic plans; and the make-up and governance structure for planning processes?
 - What is DFO’s role with respect to integrated strategic planning under WSP? Leader? Partner? Funder? Facilitator?
 - What is DFO’s core objective / expectation regarding the Barkley Pilot? Skeena?

Next Steps:

- Pending advice from SDC, next steps would include:
 - FAM-Science completing a rapid assessment of CUs and returning to OPS with a potential list of high-priority CUs for consideration;
 - FAM completing principles and approach for identifying planning units; and
 - FAM and Areas developing draft guidelines and “toolbox” (e.g. template) for integrated strategic planning.
- Over the longer-term (January 2012 and beyond), work would include:
 - Initiating interim planning processes for high-priority CUs;
 - Developing a draft framework for a long-term integrated planning process; and
 - Consultation with First Nations and stakeholders on a proposed longer-term planning process, consistent with Action Step 4.2.

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