PROCEEDINGS REPORT

February 23, 2018 Vancouver, BC

FISHERIES FOR COMMUNITIES GATHERING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE PROBLEM

BC fisheries are under threat. Policies that enable private speculative investors and large companies, whether Canadian or offshore, to purchase, own and lease local fishing rights with no obligation to actually harvest fish, are threatening the health of fisheries and coastal and fishing communities in British Columbia (BC). As a result, the many tangible and intangible benefits of BC fisheries are increasingly being taken from the coastal communities adjacent to them. Conversely, in Canada's Atlantic Region, and in neighbouring Alaska and Washington States, where policies and measures to protect independent fish harvesters and fishing communities exist, local benefits of their fisheries are on the rise.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Federal Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard has put forward a Bill – Bill C-68 – that would enshrine social and economic objectives for consideration in the Fisheries Act and enable policy change in the Pacific region. There is now, for the first time in decades, the possibility of correcting current public policy in BC that has fostered large scale privatization and speculative investment in fisheries. As a result, there have been increasing barriers in access to fisheries for those fish harvesters and communities adjacent to, and historically reliant on, them.

THE FISHERIES FOR COMMUNITIES GATHERING

The Fisheries for Communities Gathering,¹ held in Vancouver on February 23 2018, brought together over 120 people and was one of the largest gathering of fish harvesters and fisheries related organizations seen since the 1990s. There were young fish harvesters, elder fish harvesters, leaders and quiet concerned fish harvesters, Indigenous and non-Indigenous fish harvesters, from geographically diverse coastal regions, all of whom rose above their feelings of disillusionment and showed a strong and consistent will to support change. Adding to the diversity in the room, there were West Coast First Nations leaders, mayors from various coastal communities, environmental groups, fish harvester organizations, NGOs from the BC food movement, and academics. All there to express concern for the current situation in BC commercial fisheries and to add their voice to the need for change. The BC Minister of Agriculture and staff also came to support the event.

While each group came with their own experiences of the issues and had different interests, there was agreement from the entire gathering on the need for immediate fisheries policy reform to ensure that fish harvesters, First Nations, and coastal fishing communities are

¹ Facilitation and report by Ecotrust Canada with support of T Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation and many other individuals (see <u>Acknowledgements</u>).



more fully supported, and are the primary users and benefactors of the resource.

FISHERIES FOR COMMUNITIES' CONSENSUS

Despite decades of divisive policy that has fractured both the industry and the region and has undermined the viability of coastal communities and independent fish harvesters, the diverse room of interest groups and individuals at the Gathering came to a **consensus on the need for fisheries policy reform** in the Pacific region, and **consensus on the core request** to the Honourable Dominic Leblanc, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard for a policy review:

The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard, perform an independent review of BC commercial fisheries licensing policy, built on a transparent & inclusive process, to:

a) Ensure fisheries licensing policy in the Pacific region supports independent fish harvesters, First Nations, and the revival of rural fishing communities, and

b) Determine how "social, economic, and cultural"² objectives are to be achieved in Pacific region fisheries.

A further point of agreement in discussion was recognition that in addition to social, economic, and cultural objectives, law and policy must ensure that ecological integrity be restored and maintained.

There was also agreement from attendees on the guiding principles for reform, which included the following key themes:

- 1. Ensure social, cultural, economic and ecological wellbeing for fish harvesters, First Nations, and rural coastal communities
- 2. Establish local, decentralized, and inclusive governance and fisheries management, and more local and transparent ownership of fisheries access
- 3. Protect the independence of active fishermen
- 4. Rebuild and protect fish stocks for current and future generations
- 5. Prioritize First Nations reconciliation
- 6. Quantify tell the "truth" of the real cost of the privatization of fisheries
- 7. Build a healthy fishing industry that can support the next generation of harvesters particularly youth and enable older fish harvesters to retire with dignity
- 8. Provide fairness for impacted parties in any licensing transition

² As stated in proposed changes to the Fisheries act through Bill C-68

MOVING FORWARD

The mutual support, commitment, and resolve of the attendees to this convening are testament to just how important legislation and policy change is to fisherman and their communities in British Columbia. As the newly proposed Bill C-68 makes its way through the parliamentary process to becoming law, and then onto regulation, there is an earnest expectation that the consensus opinion achieved here will be respected and addressed. More specifically, through this convening, attendees have called for official recognition of the negative impacts that have arisen from the current policy, an immediate stop to current policy practices related to licence and quota distribution, and, the need for urgency – a review should be done within 6 months.

This report is a major step forward in bringing these voices to the attention of the Federal government, and those represented at the convening will continue to press for the positive progress and change they know is within reach. If it chooses to, the government now has a unique opportunity to build a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future with, and for, the people of the Pacific Coast fishery – finally delivering on a future first envisioned for the Atlantic Region, but now to be applied fairly across both coasts, for the benefit of all Canadians.

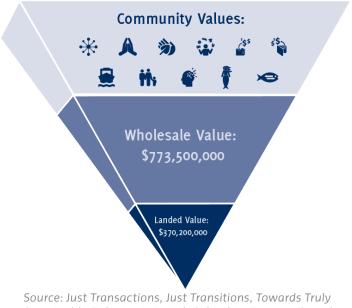


INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest threats to healthy fisheries and coastal and fishing communities in British Columbia (BC) is the increasing large scale privatization of this critical public resource. This is the result of policies that enable private speculative investors and large companies, whether Canadian or offshore, to purchase, own and lease local fishing rights with no obligation to actually harvest fish.

As a result, the many tangible and intangible benefits of BC fisheries are increasingly being taken from the coastal communities adjacent to them. Influence over decision-making has shifted away from the people and communities connected to fisheries, and fish harvesters are losing their ability to earn a living from fishing.

The statistics are staggering harvester incomes in BC have declined over the last few decades. unlike every other Canadian fishing province. The fleet is greying and young people are disappearing from the sector; over 40% of fishermen are now over the age of 54.³ Fish vendors can't access local fish to sell, and communitybased processors have a hard time getting local fish running through their plants. The number of active fishermen and vessels have dramatically declined along with local capacity and infrastructure essential to support the industry and the communities reliant on it.



Source: Just Transactions, Just Transitions, Towaras Truly Sustainable Fisheries in British Columbia, Ecotrust Canada, In press, 2017

This is a particularly stark reality when compared to Canada's East Coast, the Atlantic Region, where policies and measures to protect independent fish harvesters and fishing communities have been applied, and the value of seafood and fish harvester incomes are on the rise. The Atlantic Region tackled many of the challenges that the Pacific Region faces today beginning with the Atlantic Fleet Separation policy implemented by Minister of Fisheries Romeo Leblanc in 1979, and the owner-operator policy in 1988.

³ Williams, R. [in prep] Fisheries Seasonality and the Allocation of Labour and Skills Labour Market Information Study, Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters

THE OPPORTUNITY

In July 2017 in Nova Scotia, the Federal Minister of Fisheries announced his intention to enshrine social and economic objectives in the Fisheries Act. Such a change to the Act would significantly enable supportive policy for independent fish harvesters, First Nations, and coastal communities.

Bill C-68 was introduced in February 2018 and contains the promised changes. There is now, for the first time in decades, the possibility of correcting current public policy that has fostered large scale privatization and speculative investment in the Pacific Region. As a result, there have been increasing barriers in access to fisheries for those fish harvesters and communities adjacent to, and historically reliant on, them.

The opportunity now exists for BC to enjoy the same benefits of good policy that has been so critical to reviving fisheries in Atlantic Canada. As is the case in the East, fisheries policy can bring back the many benefits from the bounty of our oceans and revive and create new sustainable local fisheries, reinvigorate communities, provide food access and jobs, and rebuild our longstanding connections to the sea.



A DIVERSE GATHERING

The Fisheries for Communities Gathering in Vancouver brought together 124 participants, with an additional 30+ registered who were unable to travel due to heavy snowfall. One long-time fisherman noted that it was the largest gathering of fish harvesters since the 1990s and possibly the most diverse gathering in support of fisheries he had ever been to. There were young fish harvesters, elder fish harvesters, leaders and quiet concerned fish harvesters, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous fish harvesters, from geographically diverse coastal regions. All rose above their feelings of disillusion and anger to show a strong and consistent will to support change.

Adding to the diversity in the room, there were West Coast First Nations leaders, mayors from coastal communities, environmental groups, fish harvester organizations, provincial and federal elected representatives, government staff, and academics. The traditional land-sea divide was conquered at the Gathering with a good representation from the larger food movement and community. There was also a diverse range of expertise and geography represented through the guest speaker panels throughout the day. All were there to share, learn, express concern for the current situation in BC commercial fisheries, and lend their support.

The day started with an inspiring keynote address from the Honourable Lana Popham, BC Minister of Agriculture, referencing the role the Province can play to support the BC seafood sector, including fish harvesters, and fishing communities. Fin Donnelly, Member of Parliament for Port Moody - Coquitlam and NDP critic for Fisheries, spoke on the recently proposed amendments to the Fisheries Act.

Speakers from Atlantic Canada shared their experiences, which highlighted the disconnect between East and West coast policies. Speakers from the Canadian Independent Fish Harvester's Federation and the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters, as well as speakers from Alaska and New England, USA addressed the challenges facing BC fish harvesters and described positive change brought about in their own fisheries. BC presentations included speakers from 'Namgis First Nation, UFAWU-Unifor, Tla-o-qui-aht Seafoods, T'aaq-wiihak Fisheries, and the BC Food Systems Network.

OPENING

Welcome and Opening prayer: **T'uy'tanat - Cease Wyss** - artist, ethnobotanist, Squamish Nation

Squamish Nation member Cease Wyss welcomed the Gathering participants to the traditional and unceded territory of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, applauded the intent of the Gathering, and wished participants good and productive conversations.

Territorial acknowledgment and Introduction: Tasha Sutcliffe - Ecotrust Canada

Tasha Sutcliffe acknowledged the Nations upon whose traditional territory the Gathering was taking place. She then spoke about growing up in a fishing family and her work for many years with fish harvesters and coastal communities. As a result, she has studied and personally witnessed the decline in BC fisheries due to licensing policy, and the resulting loss of many tangible and intangible values they bring.

Tasha shared that Ecotrust Canada has spent over 20 years on-the-ground with community partners working to build locally-driven sustainable fisheries - building licence banks, supporting community businesses, developing ocean-to-plate traceability, designing small loan funds for fishermen, providing research and analysis on the current state of fisheries, and much more. She made the point that despite this ongoing work and the collective good work of many others, years of data on BC fisheries outcomes show that policy is failing fish harvesters and coastal communities.

She spoke to the importance of this timely opportunity, under our current Federal and Provincial governments, to come together to seek the policy reform necessary to revitalize coastal fishing communities.

She also outlined the agenda and objectives for the day, announced the speaker panels, and introduced the facilitation team of special rapporteurs and moderators, identifying individuals who would play supporting roles throughout the day.

Keynote address: Honourable Lana Popham - Minister of Agriculture, BC

The Minister passed along greetings from Premier John Horgan, who has been on trade missions telling the world about the best of British Columbia, including the seafood industry. In 2016, BC's seafood producers harvested over 291,000 tonnes of fish and shellfish with a wholesale value of \$1.7 billion.

The government recently announced the Ministry of Agriculture's budget for 2018-19 will be more than \$93 million. This will result in an increased investment of \$29 million over the next three years for Grow, Feed and Buy BC, whose mandate is to increase production and



access to local food. This budget is an investment in seafood producers and coastal communities in the province. Minister Popham's mandate has also allowed the Ministry to financially support this Fisheries for Communities Gathering, as well as the recent Young Fishermen's Gathering. These events ensure that fisheries stakeholders can come together for a common goal that is important to the province's seafood industry.

One way for the industry to realize greater benefits is to increase the value added to their product, and the Ministry can help develop these opportunities. Minister Popham stressed the need for more local processing facilities along the coast, increased production and access to local food. The Minister's mandate also includes the Grow BC, Feed BC and Buy BC Program, which will work with fisheries to market their seafood locally and strengthen their relationships with restaurants throughout BC, as much of the seafood currently available in BC is imported.

The Minister recognized the diverse perspectives at the Gathering, and reminded the room that their goal is similar and requires a team effort, and the BC government is on this team. Minister Popham acknowledged Minister LeBlanc's announcement of proposed amendments to the Fisheries Act to include recognition of social, economic and cultural elements of fisheries in the decision-making process. With the proposed changes to the Fisheries Act, new opportunities exist for collaboration between all governments, Indigenous and Metis peoples, and coastal communities.

Panel One: EXPERIENCES OF FISHERIES POLICY IN ATLANTIC CANADA

Moderated by Joy Thorkelson – United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU-Unifor)

Joy Thorkelson began working in the commercial fishery in 1974 in Prince Rupert and has since witnessed the decline of a once thriving group of fishing communities on the North Coast. The impacts of the Mifflin Plan, licence stacking and Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs) have massively reduced the number of fishermen on the North Coast. Joy also stressed that while those in the room may have differences, they also have commonalities in recognizing the importance of the social and cultural values to fishing. Joy then recognized the value of listening to other's experiences when introducing the first panel of speakers.

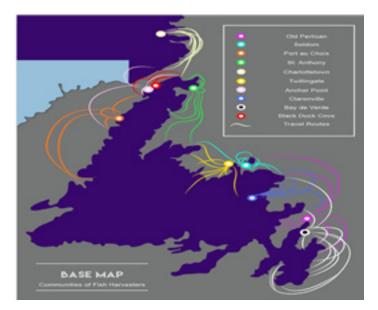
David Decker - Fish, Food, and Allied Workers Union (FFAW), Newfoundland "Rural Works: The Success and Resiliency of the Fishery and Communities in Newfoundland and Labrador"

David Decker provided an overview of the socio-economic impacts of fisheries in Newfoundland and Labrador, where around 1 in 5 people are employed in the fishing sector. He spoke of the Union being formed out of frustration with the merchant/corporate economic model of the fishery in Newfoundland. He emphasized the history of the FFAW and its collective bargaining rights, and how Minister Romeo Leblanc established the Atlantic fleet separation policy (1979), and owner-operator policy (1988). Since then, the economic benefits of both policies have translated into a doubling of the landed value in Newfoundland.

In addition, fish harvester bargaining power translates into higher ability to negotiate prices for key species such as lobster and halibut.

Overall, the FFAW, the fleet separation, and owner-operator policies have resulted in the survival of fishing communities; an increased share of the landed value captured by fish harvesters; recaptured social benefits from fishing after the cod crisis; and increased interconnectedness of fishing communities along the coast.

One key achievement of these policies is that wealth generated from the resource is retained in communities along the coast of Newfoundland,



Source: David Decker presentation

providing middle class employment for members of these communities.

Dave talked about how these policies were constantly threatened by corporate processing companies, and the very existence of controlling agreements, which leaves little leeway in decision-making, and independence for fishermen. With the Policy for Preserving the Independence of the Inshore Fleet in Canada's Atlantic Fishery (PIIFCAF) in 2007 the federal government came to re-enforce fleet separation, owner operator policies, and committed to putting an end to controlling agreements.

Dave stressed that Union membership includes the owner-operators, crew, and shoreworkers, and this diversity has led to valuable relationship building. The Union provides a space for members of the industry to put aside their differences and focus on the shared goals that unite members.

John Couture – Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR), Cape Breton "Insight into Owner-Operator Policy"

A former Department of Fisheries (DFO) licensing officer, and former fisherman, Mr. Couture talked about his experience handling licence issues at the DFO. His work is now based at UINR in Atlantic Canada, which ensures equal Mi'kmaq participation in research and natural resource management, while maintaining their traditions and worldviews, and ensures the sustainability of the resource in their traditional territory.

John discussed former Minister Romeo LeBlanc's work in preserving the independence of the inshore fleet in Canada's Atlantic fisheries and this work deemed him the "friend of fishermen". LeBlanc is seen as actively contributing to the Netukulimk guiding principle of the Mi'kmaq, which enables community nutrition and economic well-being without jeopardizing the integrity, diversity, or productivity of the environment.

Couture circled back to the importance of owner-operator policies, and contrasted East Coast versus West Coast experiences. He talked about the dangers of licence concentration in the hands of a few companies, and the impacts of the Marshall Initiative - a funding envelope by the federal government - on the inflation of licence prices.

In conclusion, John described how providing benefits to communities and creating local jobs through Owner-Operator and Fleet Separation policies are key to preserving our local fishing communities. In order for this to be feasible, he stated that as organizations and individuals, we need to speak with our elected officials and apply pressure to support initiatives like the Fisheries Act amendments.

Melanie Sonnenberg - Canadian Independent Fish Harvester's Federation

Melanie Sonnenberg talked about the disparity of economic growth between the East and West Coast fishing communities. She stressed that once you compare the Pacific and Atlantic fisheries, it quickly becomes clear that the West Coast stopped developing and the East Coast progressed. This division began with the Davis Plan and continued with Minister Romeo LeBlanc's Fleet Separation and Owner-Operator policies. Adding to John Couture's point of the policy lacking teeth, Melanie pointed out that in the late 1990s and early 2000s, it became evident that the policy was not being adhered to as intended. DFO was letting the erosion of this policy continue.

Understandably, processors did not want to lose control of the fishery but in 2007 there was a promise to strengthen the Owner-Operator policy through the introduction of "Preserving the Independence of the Inshore Fleet in Canada's Atlantic Fisheries" (PIIFCAF). The PIIFCAF Policy is part of the Department of Fisheries and Ocean's comprehensive approach to enhance the economic prosperity of fishers and fleets through the Fisheries Renewal program. This involved giving processors seven years to get out of Controlling Agreements. Even with revisions, foreign ownership is still a travesty and it continues to be challenging to prove in Atlantic Canada.

In conclusion, Melanie reiterated the point, mentioned by fellow panel members, that the policies were strengthened by all the provinces of the Atlantic Region coming together on the 'Owner-Operator' Fleet Separation concepts and pushing for them to be in the policy. She encouraged those at the Gathering to find where they have common cause, rise above their disparate issues, and work together to achieve change.

Panel Two: EXPERIENCES OF ACHIEVING VIABLE FISHERIES FOR HARVESTERS AND COMMUNITIES IN OTHER REGIONS



Moderated by **Saul Milne** – T'aaq-wiihak Fisheries Manager "T'aaq-wiihak 2018"

Before introducing the panel, Saul Milne gave a brief talk covering fisheries rights of five of the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations, notably the 2009 BC Supreme Court of Canada Decision around the recognized economic right for these Nuu-chah-nulth Nations to fish and market any species within their territory under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

Even with this win, the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations still have many barriers to achieving expected community involvement. A single species focus and high levels of monitoring present real operational challenges to these Nations. While there are operational barriers in small communities on Vancouver Island, the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations are extremely active in negotiations.

Saul highlighted the principle of Hishukish tsa'walk, meaning everything is one. The Nuuchah-nulth Nations use this principle to guide negotiations with the government and shape their vision of their fishery. These Nations are pushing for multi-species fishing opportunities and exploring terminal fisheries and small-boat fisheries. They are active in rebuilding their stocks, restoring habitat, and sitting at fisheries round-tables on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Working at a community level and collaborating with other commercial fishermen has helped T'aaq-wiihak Fisheries tackle some pressing concerns.

Rachel Donkersloot, PhD - Alaska Marine Conservation Council "Inequities & Opportunities in Alaska Fisheries"

Dr. Donkersloot spoke of the inequities and challenges facing Alaska fisheries and communities as well as the opportunities and paths forward for ensuring community-based fishing opportunities and intergenerational access. Dr. Donkersloot presented findings on a three-year study on the problems and solutions to the 'greying of the fleet' in Alaska fisheries.

The study shows how privatizing access to fisheries creates significant barriers to entry for young people. The lack of young people entering the industry today is seen in the increasing average age of permit holders (50 years in 2015). The study also found a decline in the number of youth currently participating in fisheries. For example, less than 9% of youth in the Kodiak region are currently engaged in fishing.

Another alarming issue highlighted in the study is the loss of rural access through the transferable permits. For example, more than 80% of rights to the Bristol Bay salmon fishery, the largest salmon fishery in the world, are owned by non-locals (i.e. people who live outside of the Bristol Bay region). The loss of local access stems from increased barriers to entry, especially increasing financial costs and risks. Other barriers include profitability

and diversification challenges, and social constraints linked to lack of fishing experience, knowledge and family connection to fishing.

Dr. Donkersloot outlined existing initiatives and policies within Alaska and around the world that have generated positive outcomes. For Alaska, some of these successful programs include a community development quota, super exclusive status, and commercial fisheries loan programs. Alternative measures from other parts of the world include examples of community quotas (Iceland), limits on quota transferability (Norway), community use rights (Newfoundland), student licenses (Maine, USA), and annual catch entitlements (New Zealand). Most of the examples from around the world have been created in reaction to ITQs and are designed to address inequities in access to the resource.

Recommendations outlined in a recent report published from project findings include:

- Explore non-market based forms of access to facilitate new entry and provide diversification opportunities
- Establish youth permits or student licenses and mentorship or apprenticeship programs, to provide young people with exposure to and experience in fishing and a pathway to ownership
- Develop mechanisms to protect and diversify community-based fishing access
- Support local fisheries infrastructure
- Establish a Fishing Access for Alaskans Task Force



"The costs are just astronomical when you're really young. Trying to secure loans that are \$500,000 or more is just, well —nobody's just going to hand it over to an 18 year old." Bristol Bay region fisherman

Dr. Seth Macinko – Department of Marine Affairs, Rhode Island University "Getting Unstuck: Bolted horses and other thoughts from world experience when fisheries 'rationalization' isn't."

Professor Macinko opened with the sentiment 'you are stuck, but you are not alone'. This is clear from the cases presented from around the world of the known adverse effects of ITQs. One example referenced a Tasmanian abalone fishery in which lease rates (collected by the quota owner) reached 85% of the landed value (leaving just 15% for the actual fishermen). At one time, 60% of the quota was owned by a single American (who has since sold out to Chinese investors). Consolidation, foreign control, and extreme barriers to entry by youth are common concerns worldwide as is interest in reform. For example, public opinion polls in Iceland suggested that 80% of the population wanted to pursue reforms to their ITQ program. But reforms are strenuously resisted and those opposed suggest that reforms are analogous to trying to close the barn door after the horse has already bolted.

Seth shared his assessment of the current state of fisheries and his two recommendations on how best to move forward with the current system in place. He explained that we can't get to a new future without imagining it first—the first step is just to imagine where you want to end up. Second, Seth emphasized the importance of paying attention to the human impacts



during the transition towards the future and using the draft guiding principles provided at the Gathering to start thinking in this way.

Seth urged the audience not to accept the "horse has bolted" reasoning as otherwise current and future generations are shackled by history. He wrapped up by saying the Faroe Islands are currently undergoing a significant reform and Denmark, previously a poster child for free market ITQs, is developing a 5% community quota fund.

Brett Tolley - Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA),USA "New England Mosquito Fleet & Catch Share Policy"

An avid advocate for fisheries for communities, Brett Tolley comes from a multi-generational fishing family in New England. He referenced that his great-grandfather paid \$25 for a licence, his grandfather paid \$50, his dad paid \$100 and if he wanted to fish himself, the licence fee would be around \$1 million. This is the result of catch shares being introduced to fisheries in New England. Brett then retraced the history of catch shares and the story of NAMA and its contribution to increasing the voices of small independent operators throughout New England.

Catch shares in New England created a concentration of fisheries in the hands of the few, which led to issues of lack of transparency, and major potential for fraud. This was illustrated by the case of Carlos Rafael (the "codfather"), who thought of independent small-scale fishermen as "maggots screaming on the sidelines" and "mosquitoes biting on an elephant".

NAMA was able to tackle the likes of Carlos Rafael with a multi-pronged approach. Their success can be owed to creating a strong network of connected fishermen, establishing a united vision and values for the future of the industry, and bringing this issue directly to decision makers. Brett stressed that the story of New England is not unique to New England, and these strategies can be applied elsewhere to cope with the problems created by catch shares.

Brett finally shared a few lessons learned in NAMA's process, which included working on making a strong ecological argument against catch shares. He said that bringing environmental NGOs on board with these types of campaigns is critical. Brett also said that NAMA could have protected fishermen better from the backlash of their campaigns. Finally, he suggested that focusing on instilling democratic policy recommendations is important when engaging with decision makers.

"New policies allow the biggest boats to take access from family fishermen and decimate fish stocks" Fisherman Ron Borjeson

Doug Feeney – Fisherman, Chatham, MA, USA

As a North Atlantic fisherman, Doug Feeney talked about his lived experience of the negative impact of quotas. He stressed the difficulty for young fishermen to enter the fishery and the retaliation that active fishermen experienced when they tried to speak out against the inequality of the system. Hence, media can't create stories about the current state because they can't find young fishermen willing to speak to them.

The issues arising out of catch shares, including fear amongst fishermen, also made it hard for governments to notice the problems. Doug said that being heard has additional challenges when it comes to lobbying. He goes to Washington to lobby for fishermen's interests but it's difficult when big corporations can afford lobbying power year round.

NAMA has allowed them to fight back and allowed more entrants into fisheries, and is even changing the way some of the quota owners think about the system. There is still a lot of work to be done to end armchair fishing and it's inspiring that other groups like those in Alaska are doing good work.

Question to Panel 1 & 2

Presenters from Panels 1 and 2 were each asked by the Special Rapporteurs to share a few key principles that have helped guide their work. They described key factors and principles that have contributed to, or underpin, the work in their respective communities:

- Having organizations to support fishermen
- Democratic process genuinely engaging many different people and communities involved in fisheries decision making
- Fleet diversity meaningful to communities, economies and fishermen
- Community support
- Successful fisheries management should be guided by the following questions:
 - How do you know when to stop fishing?
 - How does the next generation get in?
 - Where do you want the rents/profits to go?
- DFO has no mandate to manage ownership
- Policy needs teeth
- Having owner-on-board provisions, boots on deck, and active participation
- Equity should be a principle
- Address assumptions that drive the current management models for example, the assumption that ownership inspires stewardship, which is not necessarily the case
- Corporate ownership can be detrimental to conservation and the health of the stock poor practices and cheating schemes exist
- Diversity of interest is part of the challenge but we need to align minds and avoid the extreme paranoia that can prevail stay focused on one area of common action
- We don't all want to live in urban centres rural communities are important too
- Start with core values of membership that are embedded in communities and keep people focused

Working Session One: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR POLICY REFORM IN BC



Special Rapporteur Saul Milne opened this working session on identifying guiding principles for BC fisheries licensing policy reform. In addition to the guiding principles from the panelists, each table was provided with the following list of draft principles to review, discuss, and adapt:

- 1. Support the economic viability and well-being of active fish harvesters, coastal communities and First Nations
- 2. Support the increased independence of active fishermen
- 3. Encourage and enable new entrants particularly youth building the next generation of harvesters, and enable older fishermen to retire with dignity
- 4. Ensure fish stocks remain healthy for current and future generations
- 5. Support First Nations reconciliation objectives in fisheries
- 6. Provide fairness for impacted parties in transition

There was lively discussion during this table session, including thoughtful conversation on how they would define principles for licensing policy reform, as well as the raising of other important issues in BC fisheries (Appendix A). These table sessions identified where there was agreement with draft principles and captured the importance and meaning related to the principles through discussion. The summaries of these table discussions are highlighted here:

Principle 1 had a high level of agreement and it was felt by many participants that in order to achieve economic viability for fish harvesters, there would need to be provisions to prevent foreign and corporate investment in the fishery. Many participants believed that adjacent communities should be the main benefactors of this industry, which should be reflected in policy.

- Fisheries are a public resource, not for the benefit of corporate or individual non -fishing investors but for the benefit of fish harvesters, rural communities and all Canadians.
- Use and benefit of resources should flow to adjacent coastal and Indigenous communities
- Everything is interconnected need to add "social and cultural" to economic viability
- Fishermen need to be able to negotiate prices and need Owner-Operator and Fleet Separation provisions
- For boats to be successful now they have to be diversified but this is difficult with

licence costs

- Price of leases is one of the biggest problems
- Also should be supporting health and safety of harvesters
- Change "support" to "ensure" because status quo is not economically viable
- Value from the fish is not going to fishermen nor the consumer

Principle 2 calls for support of a thriving independent fishing sector on the coast, which participants agreed with. Wide agreement on the need for Owner-Operator rules. This principle is challenging to untangle however, as there are many corporate arrangements with fish harvesters in the industry that appear as independent but are not.

- High licence costs create indentured servant; fishermen don't want to be sharecroppers
- No foreign ownership of quota "stop immediately so we can recover"
- Preserve fleets that haven't gone to quota stepping stones to own larger boats
- Requires clarification of 'independent'
- Requires transparency of ownership
- PICFI licences should be fished by community members, not corporations
- Increase Owner-Operator rules and limit corporate ownership (Fleet Separation)
- Need for meaningful collaboration on decision-making, including fishermen
- Change is being blocked by armchair fishermen and corporations with majority vote
- Local food security requires no foreign ownership, no corporate ownership/controlling agreements

Principle 3 had the greatest agreement amongst participants as many could sympathize with the barriers faced by new entrants into the industry. The concern surrounding new entrants in BC's fishery has a number of parallels to those in Alaska, as mentioned earlier in the day.

- Entry for new participants in the fishery is important but currently way too high a cost
- Financial mechanisms need to be in place to encourage new entrants
 - model of Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust
 - some sort of funding / load mechanism would help new entrants
- Training opportunities should be available to new entrants, perhaps through mentorship programs
- Whole generations of First Nations without knowledge after decades of systemic issues



- The next generation needs to be supported to get in, and those exiting need to get out with dignity for this to work.
- A transition plan for those exiting the fishery needs to be outlined
- Look at commercial fishing bank for new entrants who need support to get in
- Fisheries policies are outdated and a barrier (e.g. boat length restrictions prohibit entry)
- Industry has to be viable for those in it to begin to attract new entrants/youth

Principle 4 is important for ensuring this industry can continue and thrive along the coast. This principle also had agreement throughout the room as participants recognize the importance of effective stock management. Many participants feel that small-boat, diversified species fisheries are important for the future of stocks on the coast.

- DFO needs to be held accountable for the health of stocks and re-establish trust in DFO
- This could mean bringing responsibility back to the community level rather than a central authority
- Coastal communities and small boat fleets are a part of healthy oceans
- Accurate data and science-based management are key and this should include First Nations and DFO science
- There needs to be an honouring of traditional and local knowledge
- More funding for science, stock assessments, and for enhancement, similar to that in Alaska
- Should include climate change concerns
- Need to not only ensure stocks remain healthy but that they are rebuilt

Principle 5 ensures support of reconciliation with First Nations communities in policy reform. This was a well-supported but difficult subject and many participants felt that though difficult, these conversations need to happen along the coast, including between First Nations and non-First Nations communities

- There is a need for roundtables, and for people to have the difficult conversations with each other and make better decisions.
- Reform must properly address the loss of access by First Nations
- There should be mentorships programs and financial support made available to youth as there are generations in communities without traditional knowledge
- A transition plan for licensing should follow reconciliation
- Permanent rights allocations and rights-based fisheries should be included

- Language revitalization is important for conservation and fisheries management
- Indigenous and coastal communities need to be connected permanently to the resources

Principle 6 generally had more debate amongst participants as to what it would mean.

- Concerns that 'fairness' is open to interpretation and needs defining
- Find a way to include the sports fishery when referencing fairness

Need good governance to move reconciliation forward

- Many commented about the importance of a transition plan for those exiting the fishery
- Government have to have compensatory mechanisms for those whose livelihoods are impacted
- People need to have a sense of how a transition could happen
- Create incentives for transfer to owner-operator

Success will come from cooperation

- Government provide seed money for licences as a Community Economic Development program
- Very complicated issue; we need to focus, borrow some simple solutions from East Coast.
- Need to reverse damage that has been done by past legislation

Other key thoughts in relation to principles captured were:

- Use and benefit of resources should flow to adjacent coastal and Indigenous communities.
- There needs to be an honouring of traditional and local knowledge.
- There needs to be a way to evaluate outcomes and a process to review policy and regulations against intended outcomes
- Need full cost accounting of privatization ensure that all impacted parties are recognized
- Ensure the democratic process is designed to include fish harvesters and communities
- Good and local governance is critical because fishermen are facing bankruptcy, communities are suffering, and need a voice

"I don't have a job because of ITQs." - Independent fish harvester

LUNCH SESSION



Abra Brynne – Ecotrust Canada; BC Food Systems Network "Filling our Plates; Fish as Food"

Abra Brynne described the foundations of the North American food movement, which date back almost 100 years. By the 1970s in Canada, the People's Food Commission led conversations across Canada on what was wrong with the food system - that it was neither supporting those who produced food nor providing a healthy and adequate diet to all Canadians. By the 2000's, the food movement was firmly founded in a range of values they wish to see attached to food, including dignified livelihoods for those who work to bring it to our plates.

More recently, the Canadian food movement has matured in its ability to bring about positive public policy change. The challenges facing fisheries and coastal communities are paralleled and well understood in the agriculture sector and championed by the food movement. Fish is understood as food, and not just as a living being or resource to be extracted. This holds enormous potential to more fully engage the food movement in supporting the principled policy and market changes that those involved in fisheries seek.

Fin Donnelly - Member of Parliament for Port Moody-Coquitlam; NDP Critic for Fisheries, Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard

Mr. Donnelly spoke about the proposed changes to the Fisheries Act that:

- Restores lost protections of fish habitat, and restores the definition of fisheries to include ALL fish
- Improves the definition of "fish habitat" by referring to the water that fish need for survival
- Includes a purpose statement to provide a framework for the proper management and control of fisheries and the conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat, including by preventing pollution
- Strengthens the role of Indigenous people in project reviews, monitoring and policy development
- Recognizes that decisions can be guided by principles of sustainability, precaution and ecosystem management
- Promotes restoration of degraded habitat and rebuilding of depleted fish stocks
- Enshrines current inshore fisheries policies into regulations

Fin noted that the proposed changes do not address DFO's conflicting mandates of conserving wild salmon while promoting harmful salmon farming practices. There is no explicit legal protection for "environmental flows," the amount and type of water needed for fish and aquatic ecosystems to flourish. And the commitment to include Indigenous people in reviews is far from Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), as specified in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Panel Three: BC FISHERIES PRIVATIZATION AGENDA FAILING FISHERMEN AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES

Moderated by Roy Alexander - Tla-o-qui-aht Seafoods

Roy Alexander talked about the extremely high costs of licences and financial struggle for fishermen in his community on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. He expressed that we need to capitalize on the advice of other speakers throughout the day and be strategic in pursuing reform, as foreign investors and non-fishermen speculators are developing lobby groups with opposing stances to Owner-Operator policy reform, and meanwhile are growing concentration of fish licences and quotas. He emphasized that this not only threatens community fishermen but is a huge Food Security issue for all Canadians.

Further, Roy stated that this is not going to be easy because DFO is currently exploring creating catch shares for Schedule II tuna and other salmon fisheries and we can be sure that this process will not be democratic. However, he stressed that we can develop a Pacific Owner-Operator policy that is fair to all licence holders, allows for a fisherman to pass a licence to the next generation, and creates a market allowing new entries a fair and reasonable living as professional fishermen.

Dr. Rick Williams – Research Director, Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH), Gatineau, Quebec "Fisheries Labour Market Information Study"

Rick provided results from the CCPFH's Seasonal Workforce Labour Market Information Study. One major finding of this study is that the Canadian fishing industry is now a longterm growth industry with sustainably managed fish stocks, rising global demand for seafood products, and new trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Canada-Europe Trade Agreement. Governments need to treat the sector as a growing asset and not a dying industry.

However, a second key finding is that the largest constraint on this growth potential is not having enough people to harvest the fish. These challenges include the aging of the fishing workforce, and shrinking rural populations due to urbanization, out-migration of working population and labour market competition. Rick stressed the need to draw new entrants to the industry with competitive incomes and career prospects.

A third key finding is that the fishery in BC is underperforming economically compared to the industry in Atlantic Canada and Alaska. A BC fisherman makes approximately \$9,000 less a year than the average Canadian income for a fisherman. BC is also not capturing value added from seafood products the same way that Alaska and Atlantic Canada are. These findings suggest that fisheries licensing and management policies in BC are not benefiting most fishing enterprises and fishing-dependent communities. Hence, Rick asks the question: what does the amendment of the Fisheries Act mean to BC, and highlighted the need for action by BC stakeholders.

Some of the suggestions provided by Rick include improving the viability of the fishery by developing more multi-species enterprises, longer fishing seasons, and industry collaboration to build markets and product value. Rick also recommended enforcing limits on speculative investors, improving access to capital, and testing alternative ways for licences and quota to be owned by professional harvesters. Rick concluded by advising that a transition to Owner-Operator and Fleet Separation policies in BC might take 10 years, which would provide ample time for current licence and quota holders who are not fish harvesters to recover their investments.

Age Profile - BC Fish Harvesters		
Age group	2001	2016
15 - 29	15%	15%
30 - 44	34%	21%
45 - 54	26%	24%
>54	24%	42%

Self-Employed Harvesters, Constant Dollars (2015) \$40,000 \$35,000 \$20,000 \$20,000 \$15,000 \$10,000

Canada

Randy Bell - Human Resource Capacity Co-ordinator, 'Namgis First Nation

\$5,000 \$0

Randy Bell comes from a community with a deep connection to the fishery. He explained that his peoples' first experiences with commercial fishing date back to 1792 with Captain Vancouver. Randy also explained that his people have an unfortunate history with DFO as many of the community Chiefs and Elders taught DFO about the waters and how to harvest fish effectively, which in the end did not work out well for them. His community thrived pre-Mifflin Plan and he has since seen the population reduced dramatically from 2,500 members in 1996 to 1,200 presently. Randy likened the decline to those on the North Coast mentioned by Joy Thorkelson and ones described by Rick Williams' research.

Randy's community has lost many fishing families, and while the remaining members have over 1,000 years of knowledge and experience, they don't have enough young people to provide the needed workforce. He explained that the out-migration of fishing families is having detrimental impacts on the community's culture. He questions where future fishermen are going to come from, if fishing isn't part of their culture and young people do not have access to a boat or the fish. Through some government funding they've been able to train around 20 people in fishing, but with no access to licences, they have gone to work elsewhere rather than staying in Alert Bay. BC is an environment of wild foods and clean water, which has kept his people going for hundreds of years.



"Salmon, clean water is our way of life, which we all need to survive" Randy Bell

In conclusion, under current policy, there has been lost access to healthy seafood on a regular basis, lost access to the commercial fishery, and the loss of a generation of experienced

fishermen. A policy reform must address where the next generation of experienced fishermen will come from and where licences will go. Reiterating points made earlier in the day by other speakers, Randy stressed the need for groups and individuals to unite because we all want the same thing: we want the opportunities of past generations for ourselves and our future generations.

Guy Johnston – BC Fisherman, United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU-Unifor), "Two Visions of Fishing"

Guy Johnston has been an active fisherman his entire working life and he recognized that this meeting was the largest and most diverse gathering of fishermen and other interested groups since the 1990s. He then spoke of his experience in the industry and how he was able to work as a deckhand for a few years to save money to purchase his own boat and licence. Guy explained that his community in Cowichan only has one boat and licence in the harbor owned by someone under the age of 50. The state of fishing in this community is the result of DFO policy moving the benefits of fishing away from coastal communities and into the hands of investors.

Guy shared the two main visions that he sees at play in the fishing industry - the Fisherman's view and the Investor's view. Fishing has been the cornerstone of coastal communities since time immemorial, and provides food security, jobs, and healthy coastal ecosystems – but in BC it has now become an investment tool. With the high cost of licences, no longer being dictated by potential earnings from fishing, the system has become broken and it is very difficult for young fishermen to enter the industry. He shared how a prawn licence in Alaska costs about \$40-50,000, but in BC that same licence is \$500-600,000.

Guy presented some visions for the future including supporting the need for reconciliation with First Nations, where communities are talking directly to each other, rather than through lawyers. He also highlighted the fact that independent fishermen and speculative investors cannot co-exist in this industry; it will have to be one or the other. Finally, Guy referenced the organizational power of fishermen in Atlantic Canada and stressed the need for fishermen in BC to organize in order to influence change.

TWO VISIONS		
sherman's View Investor's View		
 Intergenerational change in the fishing industry Healthy coastal communities/healthy ecosystems Strong stewards for the coast Reconciliations with First Nations Vibrant small boat fleet and support industries Increased food security Those who work in the fishery reap the benefits 	 Maximize return on investment Most economic benefits going to investors, not those living and working in Fishery Loss of food security Unhealthy coastal communities Unhealthy coastal ecosystem Finishing fleet based in Lower Mainland Little intergenerational change in the fishing industry 	
	Reconciliation based on lawyers, not communities talking	

Working Session Two: NEED FOR PRINCIPLED FISHERIES POLICY REFORM IN BC

For the final component of the meeting, participants gathered around their tables to discuss the following questions:

- 1. Do we want policy reform that will ensure fisheries policy supports active fish harvesters, fishing communities and First Nations?
- 2. Is there a need for the Minister to perform an independent review of BC fisheries licensing policy, built on a transparent and inclusive process, to:
 - a. determine how social, economic, and cultural objectives are to be achieved in BC fisheries, and
 - b. ensure fisheries policy in BC supports independent fish harvesters, fishing communities, and First Nations
- 3. What principles should guide fisheries policy reform in BC?

Special rapporteurs Sonia Strobel and Saul Milne opened this workings session with question 1, to which the room responded with an immediate, clear and positive consensus.

The report back from table discussions provided a clear and positive consensus on the need for the independent review proposed in question 2, and the revised list of principles in question 3 that came out of the first working session, with some suggested revisions and reinforcing and clarifying comments.

Key points of discussion

There was much discussion on the intended outcomes for the licensing policy review, though there was little debate. A key point of agreement was to change the order of a and b, giving precedence to a policy that supports, in this amended order, independent fish harvesters, First Nations, and fishing communities. Participants were united in a commitment to ecological objectives for BC fisheries, while recognizing that this request for a review references Minister Leblanc's proposed changes to the Fisheries Act where it specifically integrates social, cultural and economic objectives into a conservation-oriented piece of legislation.

Additional comments made by attendees in relation to question 2 included:

- This is urgent we need to spell out a short timeframe
- There needs to be a stop to the "quota train" in order to stem the flow of licences and quota away from independent, active Pacific Region fish harvesters and First Nations while the review is underway.
- There should also be a review of the socio-economic impact of current policy official

recognition of the negative impacts that have arisen

- The differences between Pacific and Atlantic fisheries policies are not justified
- There needs to be a truly independent and rigorous review decentralized and based in the west coast and with all four levels of government
- Full and true participation and consultation in the review process is necessary
- A licence review needs to address the inflation of licences
- Need for recognition of the rights and needs of coastal and Indigenous communities and work to ensure that the use and benefit of resources flow to them
- Rights-based fisheries should be included in this review
- We need to dismantle corporate and foreign ownership

For the third question on what principles should guide fisheries licensing policy reform in BC, the participants worked from a revised list of draft principles as provided by Saul and Sonia, based on their review of the notes from Working Session One with support from the table moderators.

In discussion on question 3, participants observed that any transition for the fishing industry that would come out of policy reform needs to be well-designed and implemented, with the full involvement of impacted parties. Participants recognized the importance of having both First Nations and non-First Nation commercial fish harvesters engaged in the review and implementation of its recommendations, so that the infrastructure vital to independent fish harvesters can be rebuilt and retained in rural coastal communities.

Additional comments made by attendees in relation to question 3 included:

- Need to properly address First Nations and rights-based fisheries, and the loss of commercial access by First Nations to resources in their territories
- Need to recognize that healthy and viable local fisheries in turn support the health and security of the BC seafood supply chain and benefit all Canadians
- Fisheries are a key part of our local food security
- Fish harvesting can be a dignified and well-paying livelihood, as long as the cost to fish is not so high that the harvest value cannot cover costs; fishermen do not want to be "sharecroppers"
- Quota kills small boat fleets
- Consideration of equity, access and rights should guide fisheries decision-making

Animated conversations around the tables were captured and shared with the whole room in a report back from each group. Over the course of the report back, there was strong consensus for a licensing policy review and policy reform guiding principles with only slight requests for revisions, primarily focused on reinforcing and strengthening the language. The revisions are incorporated in the following section "Final Outcomes".

FINAL OUTCOMES

The Gathering provided many informative presentations and fruitful discussions amongst attendees. Despite very real divisions and challenges across different fisheries, interests, geographies, communities and governments, by the end of the day the Fisheries for Communities Gathering achieved the following outcomes:

CONSENSUS ON THE NEED FOR PACIFIC REGION FISHERIES POLICY REFORM

There was a unified recognition that the current policy is not working to sustain fisheries and fishing communities for current and future generations, and policy reform is urgently needed.

CONSENSUS ON THE REQUEST TO BE MADE TO THE FEDERAL MINISTER FOR A POLICY REVIEW

The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard, needs to perform an independent review of BC commercial fisheries licensing policy, built on a fully transparent and truly inclusive process, to:

- a. Ensure fisheries licensing policy in the Pacific region supports independent fish harvesters, First Nations, and the revival of rural fishing communities, and
- b. Determine how "social, economic, and cultural" objectives are to be achieved in Pacific region fisheries.

There was also agreement in the room that the law, policy and regulations need to ensure that ecological integrity is restored and maintained.

AGREEMENT ON THE NEED FOR GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR POLICY REFORM

- 1. Ensure social, cultural, economic and ecological wellbeing for fish harvesters, First Nations, and rural coastal communities
- 2. Establish local, decentralized, and inclusive governance and fisheries management, and more local and transparent ownership of fisheries access
- 3. Protect the independence of active fishermen
- 4. Rebuild and protect fish stocks for current and future generations
- 5. Prioritize First Nations reconciliation
- 6. Quantify tell the "truth" of the real cost of the privatization of fisheries
- 7. Build a healthy fishing industry that can support the next generation of harvesters -

particularly youth – and enable older fish harvesters to retire, with dignity

8. Provide fairness for impacted parties in any licensing transition

These principles can also be seen as the foundation for the vision for BC fisheries, as they reflect the outcomes that participants want to see from policy reform, not just the guiding themes for the reform process.

Key additions to the guiding principles, which were also strongly expressed from the floor, included:

- This is urgent we need to spell out a short timeframe
- There needs to be a stop to the "quota train" in order to stem the flow of licences and quota away from independent, active Pacific Region fish harvesters and First Nations while the review is underway.
- Official recognition of the negative impacts that have arisen from the current policy
- A recognition that the differences between Pacific and Atlantic fisheries policies are not justified
- Properly address First Nations and rights-based fisheries and the loss of commercial access by First Nations to resources in their territories
- There needs to be a truly independent and rigorous review decentralized and based in the west coast and with all four levels of government
- There is a great need for some form of Owner-Operator and Fleet Separation policies on the West Coast to address these principles, but it is challenging to do and the transition will be critical.
- Establish a fisheries loan fund in BC to help finance established and new entrant fish harvesters

MOVING FORWARD

The mutual support, commitment, and resolve of the attendees to this convening are testament to just how important legislation and policy change are to fisherman and their communities in British Columbia. As the newly proposed Bill C-68 makes its way through the parliamentary process to becoming law, and then onto regulation, there is an earnest expectation that the consensus opinion achieved here will be respected and addressed. More specifically, through this convening, attendees have called for official recognition of the negative impacts that have arisen from the current policy, an immediate stop to current policy practices related to licence and quota distribution, and, the need for urgency – a review should be done within 6 months.

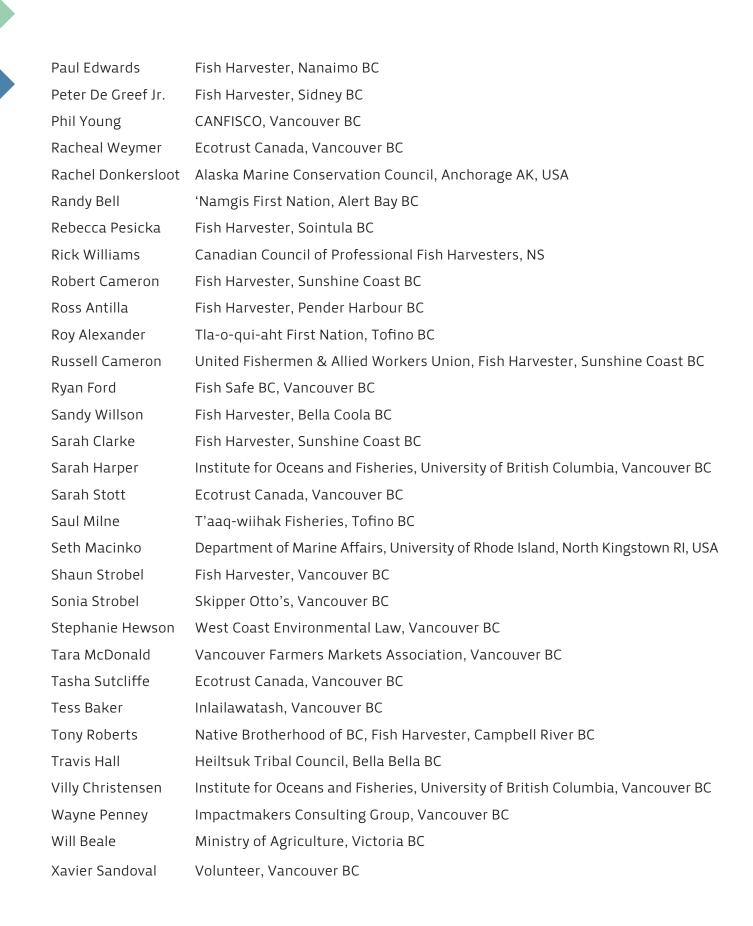
This report is a major step forward in bringing these voices to the attention of the Federal government, and those represented at the convening will continue to press for the positive progress and change they know is within reach. If it chooses to, the government now has a unique opportunity to build a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future with, and for, the people of the Pacific Coast fishery – finally delivering on a future first envisioned for the Atlantic Region, but now to be applied fairly across both coasts, for the benefit of all Canadians.

ATTENDEES

Abra Brynne	Ecotrust Canada, BC Food Systems Network, Nelson BC
Alex Reid	Fish Harvester, Heiltsuk Fist Nation, Bella Bella BC
Allison Witter	Ministry of Agriculture, Marine Fisheries and Seafood, Victoria BC
Amanda Barney	Ecotrust Canada, Prince Rupert BC
Arnold Clifton	Fish Harvester, Gitga'at Nation, Prince Rupert BC
Arthur Black	Fish Harvester, 'Namgis First Nation, Alert Bay BC
Barry Marcotte	Fish Harvester, United Fishermen & Allied Workers Union, Ladysmith BC
Bob Burkosky	Fish Harvester, United Fishermen & Allied Workers Union, Qualicum Beach BC
Brett Tolley	Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance, Chatham MA, USA
Brian Guptill	Grand Manan Fishermen's Association, Grand Manan NB
Cailyn Siider	Fish Harvester, Sointula BC
Calvin Siider	Fish Harvester, Sointula BC
Chris McPhedran	Mama'omas LP, Alert Bay BC
Christina Nelson	United Fishermen & Allied Workers Union – Unifor, Prince Rupert BC
Conrad Lewis	United Fishermen & Allied Workers Union – Unifor, Prince Rupert BC
Cyndi Peal	Fish Harvester, Prince Rupert BC
-	Greenways Land Trust, Campbell River BC
Dan Edwards	Fish Harvester, Area A Crab Association, Ucluelet BC
Danial Smith	A-Tlegay Fisheries Society, Tlowitsis First Nation, Campbell River BC
Darah Gibson	T Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, Vancouver BC
Darren Haines	Ratcliff & Company, Vancouver BC
David Decker	Fish, Food & Allied Workers Union, Corner Brook NL
David Mackay	Fish Harvester, Pender Harbour BC
David Quinn	Fish Harvester, Sechelt BC
David Reid	Fish Harvester, Bella Bella BC
Dawn Webb	AERO Trading, Vancouver BC
Dean MacDonald	Fish Harvester, Port Hardy BC
Devlin Fernandes	Ecotrust Canada, Prince Rupert BC
Dianne St. Jacques	Mayor of Ucluelet, BC



United Fishermen & Allied Workers Union – Unifor, Prince Rupert BC Joy Thorkelson Keira McPhee BC Food Security Gateway, BC Keith Hamilton Nuxalk Development Corporation, Bella Coola BC Kiera Vandeborne T Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, Vancouver BC Kim Olsen United Fishermen & Allied Workers Union - Unifor, Shawnigan Lake BC Krystle TenBrink Squamish Climate Action Network, Squamish BC Lana Popham MLA Minister of Agriculture, Saanich BC Lance Underwood Fish Harvester, Cowichan Bay BC Laura Hope Coast Funds, Vancouver BC Lawrence Paulson Fish Harvester, Prince Rupert BC Lee Brain Mayor of Prince Rupert, BC Linda Nowlan West Coast Environmental Law, Vancouver BC Louise Towell Stream of Dreams, New Westminster BC Lucy Sharratt Canadian Biotech Action Network, Halifax NS Mabel Mazureck Northern Native Fishing Corporation, Prince Rupert BC Lula Czupajlo Intern, Vancouver BC Mariah Aceto BCIT, Vancouver BC Martin Picard Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters, Gatineau QC West Coast Environmental Law, Vancouver BC Maryann Watson T Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation, Vancouver BC Megan Eadie Melanie Sonnenberg Canadian Independent Fish Harvester's Federation, Shédiac NB Michael Emes Fish Harvester, Oceans Best, Vancouver BC Michel Drouin Field Editor, Pacific Fishing Magazine, Vancouver BC Michelle Black Fish Harvester, Musqueam First Nation, Vancouver BC Michi Hunter Squamish Climate Action Network, Squamish BC Mike Smith Fish Harvester Mona Madill Mama'omas LP, Alert Bay BC Moses Martin Tla-o-gui-aht First Nation, Tofino BC Nathan Bennett Institute for Oceans and Fisheries, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC Nicola Parr Ecotrust Canada, Vancouver BC Ocean Rutherford Fish Harvester, Prince Rupert BC Pamela Zevit South Coast Conservation Program, Coquitlam BC



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

T'uy't'tanat-Cease Wyss

T'uy't'tanat-Cease is an interdisciplinary artist who works with new media, is an ethnobotanist and more recently has returned to her textiles art practice through learning Coast Salish weaving techniques. She is a member of the Aboriginal Writers Collective West Coast and lives in East Vancouver. She is a beekeeper and community engaged gardener.

Abra Brynne

Abra Brynne grew up on a farm in Syilx Territory (the Okanagan Valley) and, as part of a family of 13, learned the value of co-operation, good food, and hard work from an early age. She has been involved in community-based food systems work most of her life. Much of her focus for the past 20 years has been on reducing policy barriers encountered by small and medium scale entrepreneurs in food supply chains. With a background in agriculture, she began integrating indigenous food systems and sustainable fisheries in the early 2000s. Abra has held leadership positions on many community and food related Boards for almost three decades and is a founding member of Food Secure Canada and the BC Food Systems Network. She lives in the traditional territory of the Sinixt people and is currently the Senior Policy Advisor on fisheries at Ecotrust Canada, and the Director of Policy & Engagement with the BC Food Systems Network.

Brett Tolley

Brett is the Community Organizer for the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance. NAMA is a fishermen-led organization building a movement toward healthy fisheries and fishing communities. Brett comes from a four-generation commercial fishing family out of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. He recently spoke at the United Nations' Oceans Conference about the importance of community-based fisheries and fair seafood supply chains.

David Decker

In one form or another, David Decker has spent his entire life working in and around the fishing industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. He was born into a fishing family in Ship Cove on the tip of the Northern Peninsula. Like so many young people in rural communities, Decker grew up fishing with his father, and later took over the family enterprise. In 1990, Decker took his first job with the Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW-Unifor) when he was hired to deliver health and safety courses for the Union. A short time later, in 1991, Decker joined the staff at the Corner Brook offices of the FFAW. He carried on in that role

until 2003 when he was hired as the Union's Inshore Director, working on behalf of harvesters across the province. Later that same year, Decker was elected to the position of Secretary-Treasurer of the FFAW – a position he continues to hold today. FFAW-Unifor represents approximately 15,000 working women and men throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, most of whom are employed in the fishing industry. The Union also has members working in the hotel, hospitality, brewing, and metal fabrication industries and in marine transportation in the oil and gas industry. Decker has holds a position on the Executive Board of the Canadian Independent Fish Harvesters Federation as well as on the Board of Directors of the Newfoundland Labrador Fish Harvesting Safety Association.

Doug Feeney

Doug Feeney is a lifelong commercial fisherman from Chatham, MA. He has captained and crewed on many different boats and fished for a variety of species including dogfish, skate, monkfish, groundfish, scallops and more. Doug holds several leadership positions within local and regional fisheries management. He recently bought his first boat and is highly committed to creating fishing conditions that maximize the social, economic, and ecological values of his business and the broader fishing community.

Fin Donnelly

Fin Donnelly has been the MP for Port Moody—Coquitlam since 2009 (previously named New Westminster-Coquitlam) and is the NDP's Critic for Fisheries, Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard. He is the founding co-chair of the All-Party Oceans Caucus and the vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. Known for his grassroots, consultative approach, Fin is committed to building sustainable communities and is a strong voice for healthy oceans and fisheries. He has a long history working for a healthy environment, making 14 marathon swims in BC's rivers, lakes and ocean, including twice swimming the 1,400 km length of the Fraser River. Prior to his election as a federal MP, he served seven years on Coquitlam city council. He is currently campaigning to #SaveWildSalmon with his bill (C-228) that would transition harmful open-net salmon pens to safe closed containment technology.

Guy Johnston

Guy has been fishing for over 40 years. His fishing experience started on the deck of a crab boat on the north island and has included crewing on salmon and herring siene boats. With his own boats, Guy has prawned, gillnetted and trolled for salmon. Presently he fishes prawns and trolls for salmon out of Cowichan Bay. For Guy it is a real privilege to harvest the sea foods of the west coast. Part of how he gives back to his community and the resource is by making the time to sit on a variety of fishermen advisory boards over the years. Presently he sits on the Prawn fisherman's advisory board, is the Union's troll rep for the Commercial Salmon Advisory board, and is on the area H Troll Harvest Committee. As a way to adapt to the increasing difficulty in accessing seafood he has also operated a Community Supported Fishery for the past 7 years.

John Couture

When John is not at a meeting, he is travelling to another meeting, and not just in Unama'ki either. John Couture's role as Commercial Fisheries Liaison Coordinator at UINR has him attending industry, science and advisory committee meetings all over the Maritimes. If it's about commercial fishing and involves the interests of the five Cape Breton Mi'kmaq communities that UINR represents, John will be there! Afterwards he reports back to the communities to discuss options, outcomes, changes, and updates on commercially fished species, invasive species, species- at-risk, pollution and changes in government.

A graduate of Sydney Academy, John studied at Cape Breton University and continues to learn new skills and ways to approach issues, people and projects. John comes to UINR after a stint at Fisheries and Oceans Canada as their Aboriginal Program Coordinator, assisting communities fulfill their Aboriginal Fishing Strategy agreements. As a Licensing officer he provided advice to clients, managed licence fees, issuance and tags. While Administrative Officer he managed accounts and projects, dealt with security, occupational health and safety issues. "Every day I learn from our community managers, chiefs and coworkers. With new service cuts our communities need to do new tasks on new time lines. I want to be sure that Unama'ki is a leader."

Honourable Lana Popham

Lana was raised on Quadra Island in a do-it-yourself community, where growing food, raising animals and harvesting from the sea was a way of life. Her interest in urban planning led her to UBC where she graduated with a degree in geography.

In 1996, Lana made her home in Saanich South. She co-founded and operated Barking Dog Vineyard, the first certified organic vineyard on Vancouver Island. She also managed a crew of vineyard workers who took care of many vineyards on the Saanich Peninsula, and has been a strong advocate for food producers in Saanich for many years. Lana served on Saanich's Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Committee and on the Peninsula Agricultural Commission. She was also president of the Vancouver Island Grape Growers Association, chair of the Certification Committee for the Islands Organic Producers Association, and a member of the Investment Agriculture Board.

After being elected in 2009, Lana served as Opposition critic for agriculture for eight years. Lana is the first female minister of Agriculture in BC

Melanie Sonnenberg

Melanie Sonnenberg has been involved in fisheries management for the past thirty-seven years. In 1982, Melanie Sonnenberg began working for the Grand Manan Fishermen's Association. The organization was in its infancy, and Mrs. Sonnenberg was instrumental in its success. Her duties include co-ordination of Board meetings, follow-up on fishery management issues, creation of Fishing Plans, and the representation of our fishing fleets nationally and internationally. She serves as the Board's liaison between the Harbour Authority and the Fundy Marine Service Centre.

As one of the first Harbour Authorities incorporated in Eastern Canada, Mrs. Sonnenberg successfully formalized the management arrangement in 1989. She has served as Project Manager since that time. Her successful lobby efforts (including Small Craft Harbours personnel, federal politicians, Ministers of Fisheries and Oceans, and Deputy Prime Minister) have resulted in multi-million dollar wharf projects being completed.

Recognizing the need for new markets for surplus herring, in 1989 the Weir Sector of the Grand Manan Fishermen's Association initiated an Over the Side Sale program to foreign factory ships. Mrs. Sonnenberg travelled to Russia to expand our local market. She was responsible for operating the program, including organizing deliveries, communicating with the ship's captain, maintaining a log of events, and budget management. During the five years the program operated, over \$5,000,000 in new income was generated for Southwestern New Brunswick. As a result of her efforts, Mrs. Sonnenberg was recognized by the Province of N.B. as 1994 Woman Entrepreneur for the Fundy Region of New Brunswick.

As Co-ordinator of the Eastern Fishermen's Federation since March 1996, Mrs. Sonnenberg is a liaison for 18 independent fishing organizations in the Maritimes and Quebec. The Federation's purpose is to impart knowledge on items of interest to member organizations. Mrs. Sonnenberg organizes and ensures that the members receive the relevant materials as well as coordination of 4 Board Meetings a year. Mrs. Sonnenberg has participated in the Canadian Marine Advisory Council consistently since joining the Eastern Fishermen's Federation. Currently she is involved in a Joint Task Team initiative between the fishing industry and Transport Canada on guidelines and educational material relating to stability for small fishing vessels. Mrs. Sonnenberg is very active in the Canadian Independent Fish Harvester Federation which is a national body representing the interests of Owner Operator. Presently she is serving as President and works closely with the Executive Committee for the day to day operations of the organization.

Rachel Donkersloot

Rachel Donkersloot is the Working Waterfronts Program Director at the Alaska Marine Conservation Council. She was raised in the fishing community of Naknek in Bristol Bay, Alaska. Her work addresses fishing community sustainability, marine resource governance and rural youth issues in the Global North through research, education and policy. She is currently leading a project that will develop indicators of well-being and identify a conceptual framework for better integrating well-being concepts into the governance of Alaska salmon systems.

Randy Bell

Randy is a member of the Namgis Nation, with more than 20 years as a commercial Fisher (salmon, herring). He's been on DFO test fishing boat for the last 10 years, and has also coordinated Marine training for Namgis fishers and surrounding nations for 10 Years. He's been involved with education and training co-ordination for the Namgis Nation since 1997. CPFH



Association and for the last 3 years has worked on Capacity assessment project for fishers of Alert Bay which was a pilot project.

Rick Williams

Rick Williams is sole proprietor of Praxis Research & Consulting Inc. Praxis provides research and policy expertise in regional economic development, fisheries management, postsecondary education policy, and human resources development. Rick is currently Research Director for the Fisheries Seasonal Workforce Project, a \$1.7 million, 2-year research and consultation project led by the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (<u>www.</u> <u>fishharvesterspecheurs.ca</u>), and funded by Employment and Social Development Canada.

Rick is also Chair of the Board of Directors of Ecotrust Canada, an environmental NGO providing policy and technical support for sustainable economic development within rural primary producer communities and First Nations throughout Canada and internationally. From 2009 to 2014 Rick served as Deputy Minister to the Premier for Policy and Priorities in the government of Nova Scotia, in which position he developed and led whole of government initiatives in strategic areas including health care transformation, restructuring of post-secondary education, fisheries renewal and rural economic development. He was the government's lead in establishing and supporting the One Nova Scotia Commission (the "Ivany Commission").

Rick holds a BA in Political Science from Acadia and masters and doctoral degrees in education policy from the University of Toronto. Prior to launching Praxis Research, he was a professor at Dalhousie University for 18 years, achieving the rank of Associate Professor with tenure. His teaching and research specializations were in rural economic development and social policy.

Saul Milne

Saul Milne is from Cheam First Nation and is currently the T'aaq-wiihak Fisheries Manager, based out of Tofino BC. He is also a Phd Candidate at the University of Victoria in the Geography department working with Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation on indigenous knowledge systems. He has worked with the Fraser Basin Council and the First Nations Fisheries Council of BC focusing on integrated fisheries management, and also is a facilitator of large and small group processes across Canada.

Seth Macinko

Seth Macinko teaches fisheries law and management in the Department of Marine Affairs at the University of Rhode Island. He served for over two decades on the Scientific and Statistical Committee of the N. Pacific Fishery Management Council (Alaska) and fished commercially off Alaska before that. His research has focused on the impacts of fisheries privatization on small-scale fishermen and coastal communities. His comments on privatization are featured in the recent Netflix documentary "Rotten" (episode 6 "Cod is Dead").

Sonia Strobel

Sonia Strobel co-founded Skipper Otto's Community Supported Fishery with her husband and fisherman, Shaun Strobel, to connect fishing families like theirs directly to conscientious consumers providing premium, sustainable seafood. Sonia married into the multigenerational gillnetting Strobel family in 2001. For 12 years, Sonia was a high school teacher, who spent 5 years teaching at a maritime-themed inner-city public school in Brooklyn, New York. An activist for social and environmental justice, Sonia has been a life-long supporter of the local agricultural food movement. Applying her knowledge of Community Supported Agriculture Programs to fishing, Sonia conceived of the idea for a Community Supported Fishery in 2008 and Skipper Otto's became one of the first CSFs in the world. As a result, Shaun's father, Otto, was able to remain in fishing for many more years, and Shaun was able to return to a career in fishing. Skipper Otto's now supports over 30 independent fishing families and delivers sustainable local seafood to over 2,400 families across Canada as well as a growing number of restaurants and retailers.

Tasha Sutcliffe

Tasha Sutcliffe is the Vice President of Ecotrust Canada (EC). She is responsible for directing a suite of programming including the Fisheries program, a role she has held since 2007. EC builds sustainable economic alternatives that support people in the places they call home. EC's fisheries work focuses on building sustainable fisheries in coastal communities; fisheries that are economically viable, equitable, and socially, culturally, and environmentally responsible. Tasha has an extensive background in fisheries, community economic development, and social enterprise.

Prior to joining Ecotrust Canada, she helped form, and spent nine years as Executive Director for the Community Fisheries Development Centre in Prince Rupert, BC. Here, she worked with First Nations, Governments, community organizations, businesses, and industry in order to develop programs from the ground up to address the community crisis resulting from the decline of the wild salmon fishery. This included training and capacity building programs, new economic development, social enterprise and job creation programs as well as habitat restoration work, commercial fishery studies, and local stewardship initiatives.

The Fisheries for Communities Gathering was facilitated by Ecotrust Canada, on behalf of the many people who reached out expressing the need for such an event. Ecotrust Canada also compiled this proceedings report, deriving its content from the speaker presentations, rapporteur notes, video recordings of the day, and facilitator notes from the table discussions. This report has been reviewed by speakers and attendees.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Steering committee:	Tasha Sutcliffe, Jim McIsaac, Abra Brynne, Devlin Fernandes, Darah Gibson, Dyhia Belhabib.
Event coordination:	Ecotrust Canada with support from T Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation
Special rapporteurs:	Saul Milne - T'aaq-wiihak Fisheries Manager
	Sonia Strobel - Skipper Otto
	Brenda Kuecks - Resonate Consulting (regrets)
Panel moderators:	Joy Thorkelson - United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU-Unifor)
	Saul Milne - T'aaq-wiihak Fisheries
	Roy Alexander - Tla-o-qui-aht Seafoods
Table facilitators:	Amanda Barney, Devlin Fernandes, Dyhia Belhabib, Eliana Macdonald, Graham Anderson, Racheal Weymer, Sarah Stott – Ecotrust Canada
	Darah Gibson, Kiera Vandeborne, Megan Eadie - T Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation
	Mariah Aceto, Xavier Sandoval - volunteers
	Nathan Bennet - University of British Columbia
	Jennifer Silver – University of Guelph
	Michalina Hunter, Krystle tenBrink – Squamish Food Policy Council
Videographer:	Franka Ambsdorf – volunteer

APPENDIX A

This was a large, diverse and passionate group with a large amount of knowledge on the subject of BC fisheries. There were many topics people would have liked to have had more time to discuss and there was a series of valuable insights on these topics and issues brought forward during the Working Sessions throughout the day. Though some of these topics did not fit directly within the working session topics on licence reform in BC, they are worth capturing and are listed here:

- Understanding the role of health and safety in wellbeing of communities
- Agreement to the West Coast is lacking capacity and there is a large need to organize and increase communication between groups
 - Need for a fisheries representative to meet with management and the Fisheries Minister
- Action is wanted on mammal predation
- Policy should consider access to seafood for processors, restaurateurs and consumers
 - Remote communities need access to healthy foods
 - Processing within communities is important
 - British Columbians and Canadians should be eating Canadian fish
- Seafood marketing could be improved at the AAFC level? Provincial level?
- Access to the resource is a concern with MPA network discussions
- DFO needs more funding and a larger capacity for management and science
- Currently Pacific Regional and Central DFO are working in silos
- The government needs to be held accountable for the fall-out of the current licensing policy
- Harvesters need to be properly represented in a licencing policy review process with DFO
- Equity, access and rights should guide fisheries management decisions
- Boat length regulations and many other conditions within licensing policy are outdated
- Married licences are a barrier to ownership and should be rejected
- Adaptability should be built into policy reform and a performance review done every few years
- Dispute and compensation mechanisms should be built into policy



- There needs to be recognition of the difference between rural and urban coastal communities
- The adjacency principle should be applied in processing as well as value-add for seafood in BC, this provides market opportunities, better livelihoods and stability for rural coastal communities
- The current system (policy) creates more divisiveness and conflict
- Streamline monitoring & enforcement, look to where it is working and not creating conflict
- Need to incorporate this into food systems work (policy) and beyond who is going to feed the public when we lose the fish harvesters?
- Big industry has infiltrated decision-making process (e.g. licensing) there should be no corporations in policy making.
- There is a current failure of market design and undervaluing of resources
- Community quota could help processing in BC rural coast communities
- Government needs to recognize the importance of rural communities Canada is stronger with vibrant coastal communities







Contact: Tasha Sutcliffe tasha@ecotrust.ca



Ecotrust Canada is an enterprising non-profit powered by the vision of people and nature thriving together. We develop innovative economic solutions that enable rural and remote communities to share in the management and benefit of local resources – from forestry to fisheries to housing and energy. Our on-theground work and systems approach is entrepreneurial, partnership-based and relentlessly practical. Learn more at <u>ecotrust.ca</u>