



Rebuilding Fish Nations
AFN Fisheries Sector

**Réédification des nations avec
des ressources halieutiques**
Secteur des pêches de l'APN



First Nations Inland Working Group

March 3, 2020

Chief Scott McLeod, AFN Inland Working Group Chair





The AFN Inland Working Group

- Began as emergency issue under the National Fisheries Committee's National Policy Analysis Group
- New Working Group of the National Fisheries Committee.
- It was created by AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde
- It became its own Working Group once its own Terms of Reference were complete.
- Through advocacy with DFO renewed work on the Habitat programming began
- AFN Resolutions have existed for decades on the Freshwater Fisheries Marketing Corporation.
- AFN Resolution #08/2019 *Species at Risk and Aquatic Species* directs AFN to call on the Ministers of Environment Climate Change and Fisheries to contribute to this work



Invasive Species is linked to Species at Risk

- Climate change means our waters are warming, this is biggest contributor to changes in aquatic life.
- Invasive species frameworks successes have been limited
- Invasive species are pushing indigenous species from their habitat many of which are of limited food value
- Our rights to switch aquatic species to harvest are often denied despite many SCC decisions



The Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC)

- Consultation on its creation was not adequate as a result the first Resolution on the FFMC appears in 1970s
- It created a single entity responsible for putting First Nations-caught fish (inland) on the world market
- DFO recently appointed former Regional Director General Kevin Anderson as Interlocutor to address the Ministerial Advisory Panel's recommendations.
- Last meeting of the Inland Working Group was held in Yellowknife, NT as it is the only remaining member of the FFMC.



The North: Great Slave Lake Salmon Fisheries

- Dene Nation fisheries sector recently posed the question to DFO about what constituted an “invasive species.” The reason being that Chum salmon (Dog salmon) have been spotted in the Mackenzie system for a long time, recently other types of salmon were being caught on a more regular basis. A Dene elder, from a community on a tributary to the Mackenzie, reported that a popular Northern Pike fishing spot has been taken over by salmon and that people caught several salmon there by rod and reel. There are no longer any pike in that area.
- Other communities indicated they were also netting salmon in areas where they previously fished for Arctic Grayling. They are no longer catching grayling there. Again, the same type of salmon was being caught but no samples were provided. There are other similar reports along the Mackenzie system as far south as Fort Smith and as far east on Great Slave Lake as Lutsel K'e.



The Great Lakes – Transboundary waters and fisheries management

- After many years of advocacy by the AFN and individuals First Nations, the International Joint Commission (IJC) finally has an Indigenous commissioner, Henry Lickers.
- The Great Lakes face many threats, where invasive species and species at risk are the most recent.
- Contamination by various industries and dewatering from various diversions have taken away much needed habitat for great lakes fish and as a direct result many fisheries have disappeared.
- Akwesasne is the focus of on an IJC study to look at cumulative contamination in fish previously consumed by band members.



Transboundary waters: Lake Winnipeg

- Inland Working Group has heard many concerns from northern First Nations like Kinonjeoshtegon, Pinaymootang and Fisher River about the fisheries of Lake Winnipeg.
- Its fisheries contribute \$30 million dollars to the Manitoba economy annually
- Climate change is significantly altering habitat in addition to various obstructions like dams, diversion projects that alter water levels.



Nipissing's Fisheries Management Plan

- Does it have a protocol to address invasive species – what happens if invasive species become evident in Lake Nipissing?
- Does Nipissing have a Species at Risk rebuilding policy?
- Nipissing on its own has done a lot of policy and legislative development but still more is needed to address threats like invasive species but First Nations must lead and work together in unison.



Other – AFN National Fisheries Committee

- Co-Chairs Regional Chief Roger Augustine and Regional Chief Terry Teegee (BC)
- Members appointed by Regional Chiefs
- Highlights:
- February 27, 2019 - Ottawa
 - Met with DFO Minister Jonathan Wilkinson
- July 22, 2019 – Fredericton
 - Pre-AGA meeting
- October 1-2, 2019 – Listuguj Mi'gmaq Nation
 - Support for commercial lobster fishery and community feast
- December 2, 2019 - Ottawa
 - Met with DFO Minister Bernadette Jordan
 - Met with commissioners from International Joint Commission



Other – AFN National Fisheries Committee

Issues and priorities:

- Towards a Secretariat in Support of Implementing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Related to Fisheries
- Aquatic Species-at-Risk
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Convention on Biological Diversity – Post 2020 Framework – setting international goals on protected areas for 2050
- Working group updates
- Note: all work is directed by resolutions passed by Chiefs-in-Assembly



Other – AFN Fisheries Sector

- **National Aquaculture Working Group (NAWG)** – Looking at new federal Aquaculture Act and General Aquaculture Regulations (GAR)
- **Oceans Working Group (OWG)** – enabling marine Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) into National and International recognition
- Hosting 2-day workshop on regulations from amendments of the **Fisheries Act**
 - Fish and fish habitat protections
 - Rebuilding fish stocks
- Hosting 2-day workshop on **Indigenous Knowledge Protocols**
 - Intellectual Property Rights
 - UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
 - Note: guided by Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group (IKAG)
- **AFN National Fisheries Forum “Rebuilding Fish Nations”**
 - June 2-5, 2020 in Fredericton, NB