



## **STATEMENT FROM COALITION OF FIRST NATIONS ON SALMON FARMING LICENCE RENEWAL IN OUR TERRITORIES**

June 22, 2022

Today's announcement regarding the reissuance of salmon farming licences in our respective territories, together with next steps in a transition planning process, is welcome news for the many First Nations in our Coalition who have been fighting hard to assert the rights, title, and self-determination of their communities.

Although we asked Ottawa for a longer licence renewal term and have been disappointed by the consultation process with concerned Nations by the federal government, we are thankful to the Government of Canada for finally recognizing the inherent rights and titles of our Rightsholder Nations who wish to pursue pathways for sustainable seafood production in their territories.

Our Coalition of Nations supports working with the salmon farming sector to build those pathways. We believe the sector has a role to play in the economic wellbeing and health of our communities by engaging in transition development that will look different in each of our traditional territories. The sector continues to advance technologically and work with First Nations to ensure they operate in ways that are sustainable, responsible, and in line with our Nations' goals and values.

We are ready to begin this transition journey and build a new path forward with both the governments of Canada and British Columbia, as well as the farming sector, to help lead Canada's Blue Economy. As the Peoples who have lived on these lands and waters for millennia, we hope our voices will guide the way. Our Coalition Nations trust the science that says salmon farming poses no more than minimal risk to our wild salmon, and so, as we advance, we will look outward at other factors impacting Pacific salmon with our science, our traditional ecological data, and the invaluable knowledge passed to us by our Elders.

In the future our Nations plan to build further capacity through a transition process with the sector designed to support Indigenous-led scientific monitoring, enhance wild salmon conservation work, and grow our vital Guardian Watchman programs.

By working together using the traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) of our territories and Indigenous-led scientific resources, the development of aquaculture in our waters can be a successful joint venture that supports economic self-determination, enhances our wild salmon conservation efforts, bolsters our coastal communities, and helps lead Canada's Blue Economy.

We take our responsibility seriously to govern our fisheries and be stewards of our lands and waters. We see today's announcement as a crucial first step in our Nations reclaiming access to the management of aquatic resources in our territories.

**Media inquiries:** [info@firstnationsforfinfish.ca](mailto:info@firstnationsforfinfish.ca)