



August 2, 2022

Coalition of First Nations for Finfish Stewardship's statement in response to DFO's framework for salmon farming transition engagement with First Nations

After our preliminary review of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' *Framework for Discussion* regarding an Open-Net Pen Transition Plan, the Coalition of First Nations for Finfish Stewardship (FNFFS) is cautiously optimistic about the federal government's next steps to engage with First Nations on the future of finfish farming.

Our member Nations have been asserting our Rights and Title to both the federal and provincial governments regarding salmon farming in our waters since March 2022, and today we are encouraged to see how many of our concerns, input, language, and socio-economic data have been woven into the fabric of this Framework.

Of particular interest is the federal government's recognition of the importance of our salmon farming partnerships, and how they directly impact the economic and social health of our communities in the form of good, meaningful jobs; benefit agreements with the sector; Indigenous-owned businesses working in salmon farming; and in some instances First Nations' tenure (marine lease) ownership. We also appreciate the formal acknowledgement of our push for more Indigenous-led research, monitoring, oversight, and management of aquaculture and wild salmon conservation in our territories.

However, of concern regarding this Framework are two issues:

1. The short time frame for engagement with First Nations, and
2. The First Nations' Fisheries Council's (FNFC) facilitation of First Nations engagement sessions and workshops in the consultation process.

Considering the weight of the potential impact this transition plan will have economically and socially on our communities, and the busy fishing season in the coming months for our people, our Coalition Nations call on DFO to extend the consultation process for the Open Net-Pen Transition Plan into 2024 to ensure proper, respectful engagement for each Nation occurs.

We also expected an objective consultation process with our Nations; however, having learned that the First Nations Fisheries Council (FNFC) is facilitating engagement sessions for Tier 1 and Tier 2 First Nations on this file, we cannot trust that an impartial process will occur, as the FNFC's stance against salmon farming is well known. As such, our Coalition will continue its own transition communication, planning, and engagement with member Nations,



the sector, and both the provincial and federal governments to ensure a fair transition process takes place.

The Coalition is thankful to the Minister, her department, and the provincial government for continuing to sit down and listen to our Nations as we walk through this complicated process together. We appreciate the work and thoughtfulness that have gone into this Framework and look forward to continuing these tripartite conversations with all governments at the table.

We would also like to invite Minister Murray to meet with our Coalition Nations in coming weeks to discuss our processes further, as well as to seek some clarification on your department's methods on this file going forward.

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