



Proceedings Summary



Fisheries For Communities Gathering 3.0

February 22-23, 2023 in Victoria, BC
on Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ territories

**“If the ownership is
stripped out of the
community, so are the
benefits.”**

Guy Johnston

fish harvester from Cowichan Bay, BC



The Fisheries for Communities Network is a grassroots movement working to ensure the many values of BC fisheries flow to the people on the water, on the dock, and in adjacent communities.

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“The problem is too many commercial fishing licences and quotas are in the hands of investors and offshore owners. This is driving up prices and keeping young people out of fishing. This is threatening our west coast fisheries, coastal communities, independent fishermen and First Nations in BC.”

- Chief Arnold Clifton, Gitga'at First Nation

Introduction

Fisheries bring a wealth of value to coastal communities, delivering healthy, sustainable seafood, widespread economic benefits, and a connection to local ecosystems. However, over the past several decades, Pacific fisheries have suffered due to federal policies that shift the benefits of fishing away from harvesters and their communities, and toward vertically integrated national and foreign companies and speculative investors.

Fisheries for Communities is a grassroots movement made up of concerned Indigenous and non-Indigenous fish harvesters and their families, small businesses, community organizations, fishmongers, chefs, restaurateurs, coastal community members, academics and researchers that all share a commitment to ensure the many tangible and intangible benefits of BC's commercial fisheries benefit the people on the water, on the dock, and in adjacent communities.

Over two days, more than 160 participants from a wide range of organizations and independent enterprises gathered in Victoria, BC, on February 21st and 22nd, for the third Fisheries for Communities Gathering. For attendees, it was a collaborative and exciting two days (and one evening) that gave a powerful voice

to the needs and aspirations of coastal communities and urged government decision-makers to stop ignoring the devastating impact of current fisheries licensing policies.

Interest in the Fisheries for Communities movement has grown substantially over the years. Many people with expertise on the issues and potential solutions for West Coast fisheries were eager to share their knowledge and ideas at the Gathering. The panel presentations informed and inspired highly productive roundtable discussions where participants identified current challenges and envisioned a better future. Panel members and keynote speakers shared their research findings and lived experiences, confirming the critical need for change. First Nation leaders, Members of Parliament, and Members of the BC Legislature also affirmed this need for change and gave their commitment to push forward with much needed reforms. Most importantly, fish harvesters from across BC led the call for action on a made-in-BC owner-operator policy and emphasized that the time for change is now – before it's too late.

"I would like to continue being a commercial fisherman, and owner operator is the only way that I see our younger generation having any opportunity." - Kim Olsen

Opening Addresses

Tasha Sutcliffe, Senior Policy Advisor for Ecotrust Canada and Emcee for the Gathering, welcomed participants and introduced the Fisheries for Communities Network for those new to the movement. She provided an overview of the two previous Gatherings and the strong consensus statements on policy change generated by attendees.

In her keynote address, Kelly Greene, MLA for Richmond – Steveston and the Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries within the Ministry of Water, Lands, & Resource Stewardship, highlighted the important work of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans (FOPO). Greene asserted that the sharp differences in DFO's licensing policies on the East and West Coasts are creating highly unequal social and economic outcomes. She made it clear that the BC Ministry of Water, Lands & Resource Stewardship is committed to working with DFO on policy changes to ensure that the benefits of BC's fisheries remain in BC and the many communities along the west coast.

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“I'm here to listen to what you have to say, and to bring the questions that you have back to the Minister [of Fisheries] and DFO.”

- Ken Hardie, Liberal MP in the House of Commons of Canada

Paul Kariya, speaking on behalf of Chief Arnold Clifton, confirmed that the current DFO licensing policy does not work for independent harvesters and First Nations people who possess the abilities and motivations to harvest seafood sustainably for generations to come. He described how Coastal First Nations and the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union (UFAWU-Unifor) have produced a position paper to share with the federal Fisheries Minister asserting that change must take place in the Pacific region fisheries licensing policy, and that their

organizations will work with the Fisheries for Communities Network and others to ensure that this happens.

Ken Hardie, the Liberal Member of Parliament for the riding of Fleetwood – Port Kells, emphasized that the FOPO Committee is calling on DFO to report on what they have done since the 2019 FOPO

Recommendations were developed. Hardie also shared that DFO is preparing a report on beneficial ownership of BC's licences and quota to be released soon, and that he is committed to hearing from the Fisheries for Communities Network to provide solutions to the challenges ahead.



Kelly Greene, MLA for Richmond - Steveston and the Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries within the Ministry of Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship was a keynote speaker on Day 1 of the Fisheries for Communities Gathering.

Panel Presentations

The agenda for the Fisheries for Communities Gathering was co-developed by a Steering Committee of eleven individuals from different member organizations and enterprises. Panels of experts presented their views on ways to return the benefits of fisheries to First Nations and coastal communities. These speakers included fish harvester leaders, academics, First Nations representatives,

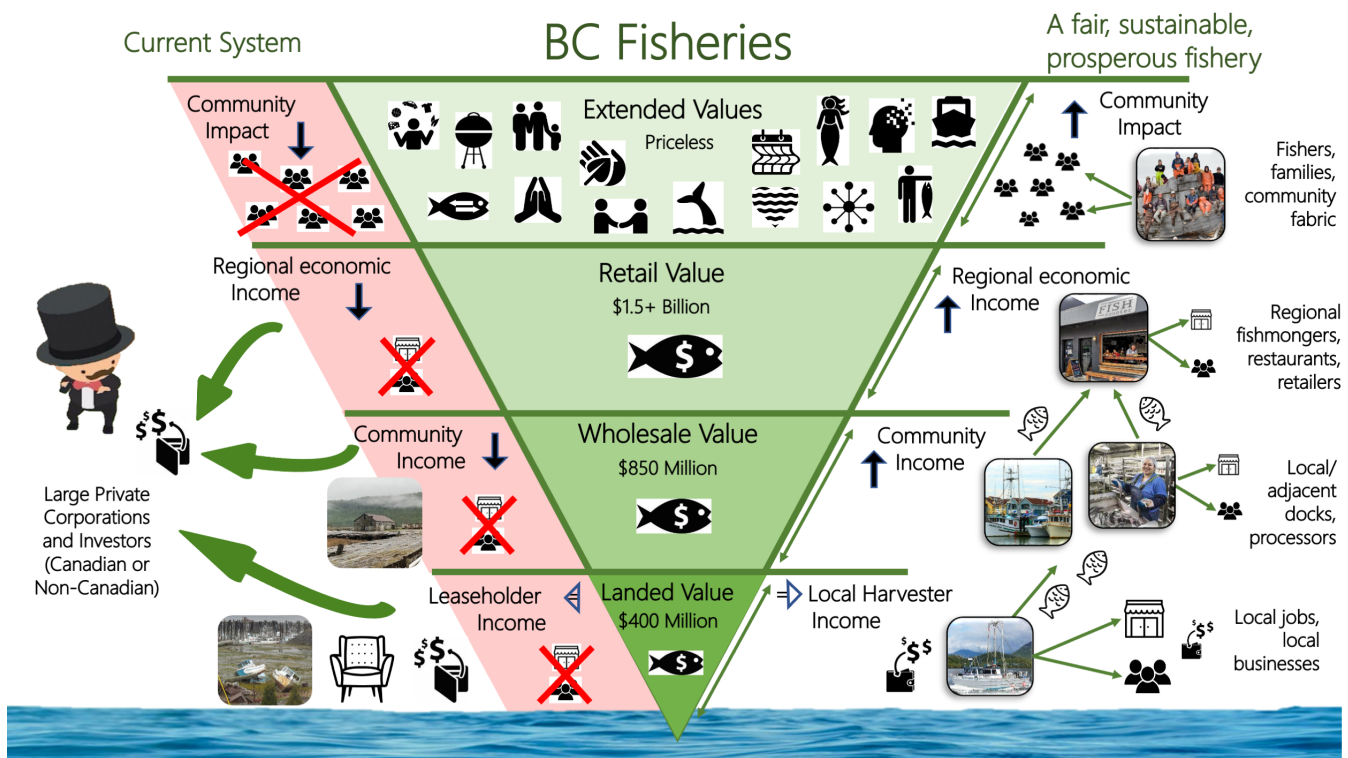
union organizers, environmental organization leaders, food security advocates, elected federal and provincial officials, and officials from DFO and the Provincial Ministry of Water, Fisheries, and Coastal Policy and Planning. All these panelists shared essential information and gave Gathering attendees much to consider and discuss.



Kyle Louis, UFAWU Vice President, presented his direct experience as a fish harvester in the first panel.

Panel 1 - Understanding and measuring issues of licence/ quota ownership, where the values from BC caught fish flow, and the impact on the community

MODERATOR:	VILLY CHRISTENSEN, PROFESSOR, OCEANS AND FISHERIES, UBC
PRESENTERS:	Jen Silver, Professor in the Dept. of Geography, Environment, and Geomatics, University of Guelph Understanding Ownership and Access
	Kyle Louis, UFAWU Vice President, active fish harvester Fish harvester direct experience
	Tasha Sutcliffe, Senior Policy Advisor, Ecotrust Canada Fisheries Socio-Economic Trends
	Melissa Collier, West Coast Wild Scallops, active fish harvester Fish harvester direct experience
	Randy Bell, Manager of Training, 'Namgis First Nation A coastal First Nation's experience



A slide from Tasha Sutcliffe's presentation on Fisheries Socio-Economic Trends.

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“If we want a sustainable, vibrant commercial fishery in BC, we need policy change. I don't know if anyone's listening – I believe more people are today than 10 years ago. But we need secure fisheries access for active harvesters and First Nations. And to do this we have to phase out foreign ownership, and ownership of licences and quota by large corporate non-fishing entities, rentiers, investors, and speculators.”

- Tasha Sutcliffe, Ecotrust Canada

Panel 2 - Federal Standing Committee of Fisheries (FOPO) report “West Coast Fisheries: Sharing Risks and Benefits” – Where we are today

MODERATOR:	JIM MCISAAC, CANADIAN INDEPENDENT FISH HARVESTERS FEDERATION
PRESENTERS:	Neil Davis, Regional Director, Fisheries Management, DFO, Pacific Region DFO Progress on FOPO Report and calls to action for license reform
	James Mack, Assistant Deputy Minister - Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship Supporting improved community socio-economic outcomes in the Fishery



Ministry of
Water, Land and
Resource Stewardship

Fisheries Licensing

- BC supportive of ensuring the benefits of our shared fisheries and marine resources flow to coastal communities
- WLRS provincial lead in work with DFO on Pacific Salmon Strategic Initiative - Harvest Transformation pillar and follow up to FOPO recommendations.
- BC’s Coastal Marine Strategy the opportunity to set provincial policy approach.

A slide from James Mack’s presentation on Supporting improved community socio-economic outcomes in the Fishery.



Panel 2 - Federal Standing Committee of Fisheries (FOPO) report “West Coast Fisheries: Sharing Risks and Benefits” and where we are today, with moderator Jim McIsaac from the Canadian Independent Fish Harvesters Federation.

When asked: “Does 2023 and beyond include more dedicated conversations inside DFO around exploring the owner-operator policy, and what does that look like?”

Neil Davis, Regional Director in Fisheries Management for DFO Pacific Region said:

“Clearly, there are some really strong views about solutions, and so I fully expect that we’re going to hear about things like the owner-operator proposal. I think we did have some productive discussions with staff about that proposal ... we’re certainly not going on pause or moving away from this. It is a commitment that we have to follow through on engaging. There will be advice that goes forward that reflects what we’ve heard, so that the department and our minister are in a position to consider potential changes to the way we manage, and the policies that we have in place.”

Panel 3 - Fishing for better outcomes – moving the dial on licensing policy

MODERATOR:	JON CROFTS, CODFATHER'S/SLOWFISH
PRESENTERS:	Paul Kariya – Senior Policy Advisor, Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative
	Guy Johnston – Secretary Treasurer, United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union/active fish harvester
	Carl Allen – Treasurer, Canadian Independent Fish Harvesters Federation/Vice President, Maritime Fishermen's Union
	Sonia Strobel – CEO, Skipper Otto/Fisheries for Communities/Slowfish



Paul Kariya, Senior Policy Advisor, Coastal First Nations, Great Bear Initiative.

Panel 4 – Lessons from other regions, common ground and transition to better policy outcomes

MODERATOR: GUY JOHNSTON, UFAWU/PRAWN CAUCUS	
PRESENTERS:	Mark Dolomount, Professional Fish Harvesters, NFLD – Owner-operator, defending inshore fleets, & rebuilding East Coast fisheries & communities
	Ann Robertson and Alexis Kwachka, Alaska, USA – Who Fishes Matters
	Marta Cavalle, Low Impact Fishers of Europe – Uniting small-scale fishers to achieve fair fisheries, healthy seas and vibrant communities
	Rick Williams, Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters - Understanding the opportunity for policy change and how to do a positive policy transition in BC



Rick Williams presenting - “The BC fishery is not an omlette!”



Omelet argument is a red herring

- Minister decides “best use” of ocean resources
 - Has power to “consider” socio-economic outcomes when setting fisheries management policies and regulations
 - Every licence issued every year with conditions set by minister
- Many examples of big policy changes & reallocations
 - 1990s fleet down-sizing
 - Reconciliation agreements with First Nations
 - MPAs
 - PIIFCAF & Atlantic regulatory changes
- Chicken and egg decision... which comes first?
 - Workable transition plan
 - Political will and policy priority

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CFN-UFAW Shared Vision for Owner- Operator Fisheries in Canada's Pacific

Immediate steps for implementing a transition

A clear policy commitment from the DFO Minister, to work with the Province, and First Nations to collaboratively develop and implement a stakeholder engagement and transition planning process for a new Pacific Region licensing regime in which all appropriate commercial fishing licences and quotas will transition to owner-operator or First Nation ownership and control

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Slides from Rick Williams' presentation on understanding the opportunity for policy change and how to do a positive policy transition in BC.

Panel 5 - The work of FOPO and reflections on the way forward

MODERATOR:	SONIA STROBEL, SKIPPER OTTO
PRESENTERS:	Mel Arnold, MP North Okanagan/Shuswap, Member of FOPO
	Ken Hardie, MP Fleetwood-Port Kells, Member of FOPO
	Lisa Marie Barron, MP Nanaimo-Ladysmith, Member of FOPO



Sonia Strobel from Skipper Otto moderates Panel 5 with MPs Mel Arnold, Ken Hardie, and Lisa Marie Barron.



Roundtable Discussions

As Fisheries for Communities is a grassroots movement, it was essential that the Gathering made time for all attendees to contribute to the conversation. We know that those working on fish boats and on the docks in coastal communities are the experts in their enterprises and need to lead the process of change. The two facilitated roundtable discussion sessions generated invaluable insights as we heard directly from participants.

On the first day, 110+ participants discussed the lack of action taken by the federal government since the previous two Fisheries for Communities Gatherings in 2018 and 2020. Participants voiced their collective disappointment in DFO following the previous Fisheries for Communities Gatherings, citing the limited progress in implementing the FOPO recommendations or making any meaningful commitment to policy reform.

Attendees then shared understandings about all that has taken place across the network since the last Gathering, including the development of a position paper: “Shared vision for Owner-Operator Fisheries in Canada’s Pacific.” This policy paper was co-developed by Coastal First Nations and the

United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union. Participants reviewed the paper in detail and expressed their support for a made-in-BC owner-operator policy for the Pacific Region and confirmed the value of ensuring all quota and licences are owned by working harvesters or First Nations.

During the second roundtable discussion, participants discussed what an authentic, fair, and transparent transition to owner-operator and First Nations control of commercial access rights might look like. They recognized that there is no uniform solution that could be applied universally, and that the details of owner-operator designations will have to be developed on a fishery-by-fishery basis. This discussion enabled participants to think through this process and identify the essential elements of such a transition.



Two facilitated roundtable discussions sessions were held to generate and share valuable insights from attendees.



Evening Seafood Celebration and MLA Event

On the first evening of the Gathering, the Fisheries for Communities Network hosted over 160 participants and other guests in a fabulous celebration of seafood prepared by renowned BC chefs with seafood from local harvesters, many of whom were in attendance. This event served as an additional opportunity to emphasize the value of returning fisheries benefits to coastal communities.

The meal featured locally harvested seafood prepared by BC Chefs:

- Dai Fukasaku (Prince Rupert)
- Aman Dosanj (Kelowna)
- Minette Lotz (Naramata)
- Oliver Kienast (Sooke)
- Morgan Wilson (Victoria)
- Mica Verbrugge (oyster shucker from Port Alberni)

Speakers included:

- Welcome and opening prayer - Cecilia Dick, Songhees Nation
- Adam Olson, MLA Saanich North and the Islands, House Leader of the BC Green Party
- Jordan Sturdy, MLA West Vancouver-Sea to Sky
- Nathan Cullen, MLA Stikine, Minister of Water, Land, Resource Stewardship

- Jon Crofts, Codfather's Seafood/Slow Fish
- Brian Wadhams, 'N̓amgis First Nation Councillor and active fisherman
- Corky Evans, Former BC Minister of Fisheries



“The federal government sent its standing committee on fisheries to BC to study the issues. They did a wonderful job and the voices of the people came through loud and clear. They made rational and thoughtful recommendations, both of a vision and a transition plan to get there ... The workers, the communities, the Nations and the Union are asking to implement the report ... The elected people now have to act.”

- Corky Evans, former BC Minister of Fisheries



BC chefs prepared plates of locally harvested seafood for Gathering participants and MLAs in the evening on Day 1.





Fish Harvester Panel: Reflections and Call for Action

One of the most powerful presentations of the gathering was the dramatic show of support and call for action from fish harvesters throughout BC. Although several independent harvesters were still in the room, many others could not be there in person for the entire two days because they couldn't afford to take the time away from their enterprises as they prepared for the upcoming fishing season. However, many stayed connected to the Fisheries for Communities process in the room. The

call for action panel was led by harvesters – Russell Cameron, Melissa Collier, and Duncan Cameron – followed by 18 fishers calling in from their boats, docks, trucks, and communities to demand immediate action from the Federal government on creating a made-in-BC owner-operator policy to put the ownership of fishing licences and quota into the hands of active harvesters and First Nations.



“I own licences, I don't think my licence values are going to drop that much. I'd way rather sell them to another harvester or First Nations than a processor who is going to lower my crab price. So in summary, it seems like there's a lot of support here. I think we just need to get this done and get moving.”

- Duncan Cameron, 4th generation fisherman



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“I just got outbid for my prawn licence. I paid \$30,000 for my prawn licence last year, I bought new gear, outfitted my boat, put over \$100,000 thousand dollars into it, and I just got word about three hours ago that I don't have a licence now. Because a plant went behind closed doors and outbid me by double the licence price. The person that got it is not going to be fishing the boat. They just got the licence for somebody else to fish, we need owner operator.”

- Kyle Louis, fish harvester



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“The race to the bottom is on and fishing for the least amount possible has led to safety challenges, budgets, conservation issues, and a raft of other concerns that fishermen are having to deal with on a day to day basis. We need to change the system. I think personally owner operator doesn't go far enough. But I think it's a step in the right direction.”

- Andy Olson, Chief Executive Officer at Nuu-chah-nulth Seafood



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“For me owner operator is the only way for the future and I can't see myself being here if it doesn't go that way.”

- Theodore Assu, fish harvester



Consensus

After two comprehensive and challenging days, an event summary was provided by the rapporteurs and a draft consensus statement was shared with the Fisheries for Communities attendees. When asked, the room gave support for the consensus statement moving forward.

Statement:

We are disappointed in the lack of action from the federal government in recognizing the urgency of the issues raised by BC's coastal fishing communities regarding licence inequity and the need for a comprehensive review of the current licensing regime.

SHARED GOAL

We are committed to working together to ensure that the benefits generated from West Coast commercially harvested fish stay with working fish harvesters, First Nations, and adjacent communities, contributing to resilience, prosperity, and well-being for this coast and for the province.

CALL TO ACTION

To this end, we call on the Government of

Canada, to work with BC First Nations, the Provincial Government, local governments, and harvester organizations, to develop and implement a transition to a Pacific Region commercial fisheries policy framework and licensing system that ensures licence and quota ownership and use by working fish harvesters and First Nations communities.

STEP 1

A clear commitment from the Government of Canada to transition to a new Pacific Region licensing regime in which commercial fishing licences and quotas will transition to owner-operator or First Nation ownership and control.

We also call on the Province of British Columbia to publicly support and actively advocate this call to action.

STEP 2

We agree that key elements of a transition plan:

- Must address the same policy objectives for the Pacific Region as are now in effect for commercial fisheries on Canada's Atlantic coast, i.e.: to preserve and protect the independence of licence

holders in commercial inshore fisheries ... and [ensure] that the economic benefits from fishing stay with harvesters and within their communities.

- Must be developed by Canada, BC, and First Nations through equitable, transparent engagement with working fish harvesters, coastal communities, and other industry stakeholders.
- Must include measures to protect the interests of working fish harvesters who may be negatively impacted by these changes.
- Must be implemented over a limited period, no more than 7 years as in the PIIFCAF case, to allow current licence and quota holders to recover their investments,
- Must not contribute to excessive price inflation and allows purchasers to finance their acquisitions at rates that support long-term enterprise viability.
- Must include new policies and programs to facilitate labour force rebuilding and pathways for new entrants to become enterprise owner-operators, including community tools to support access transition and affordable financing options tailored to the industry, like the fisheries loan boards now in place in other jurisdictions.

Further, the four FOPO Recommendations that have already been agreed to should be actioned on immediately:

#2 - Stop future sales of quotas and licences to non-Canadians

#8 - Financially incentivize independent fish harvester ownership of licence and quota

#19 - Regulation of leasing costs during transition

#4 - Transparency of beneficial ownership of quotas and licences





Conclusion

The industry, First Nations and community representatives who participated in the 2023 Fisheries for Communities Gathering expressed their shared disappointment in the lack of action from the federal government in recognizing the urgency of the issues raised by BC's coastal fishing communities regarding licence inequity and the need for a comprehensive review of the current licence regime.

There has been minimal progress made on the FOPO recommendations since they were delivered in 2019, and individuals and organizations across the Fisheries for Communities movement are frustrated with the lack of government accountability on this pressing issue.

The Fisheries for Communities Network is calling on the Government of Canada, to work with harvester organizations, First Nations, the BC government, local

governments and other coastal community leaders to develop and implement a transition to a Pacific Region commercial fisheries policy framework and licensing system that ensures licence and quota ownership and use by working fish harvesters and First Nations communities. The time for this change is now – before it's too late.

Appendices

Appendix A: Attendee list

Gathering and Seafood Gala participants

Last Name	First Name	Organization/affiliation
Alexander	Olivia	Vancouver Island University
Arnold	Mel	FOPO Committee 2023 Associate Shadow Minister for Fisheries Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Assu	Theodore	Fish Harvester
Atkins	Mike	
Bachrach	Taylor	Parliamentarian - Deputy Critic for Fisheries and Oceans - NDP
Ban	Natalie	UBC
Barron	Lisa Marie	FOPO Committee 2023
Baybutt	Shawn	Shuswap Nation
Bell	Randy	Namgis Nation
Bendickson	Cynthia	
Bevan	Joe	Economic Development for Gitgaat First Nation
Birnen	Shane	
Bouchard	Callie	
Buchanan	Vanessa	Coordinator for Five Nations Fishery, Ha'oom Fisheries Society
Bujtas	Sean	Mayor of Houston
Burt	Jenn	BC Marine Program Lead, Nature United
Cameron	Duncan	Fisherman
Cameron	Duncan	Fisherman
Cameron	Russell	UFAWU-Unifor leaders
Carver	Rosanna	

Cavalle	Marta	Executive Secretary of LIFE
Christensen	Villy	UBC Oceans
Collier	Joel	Fishermen
Collier	Melissa	Fishermen
Cook	Chris	Namgis Nation
Cook	Emily	Packer at Skipper Otto. Dad was fisherman and worked for a community supported fisheries company
Cox	Frank	Journalist, West Coast Now
Crofts	Anne-Marie	Slow Fish
Crofts	Jon	Slow Fish
Davis	Neil	Regional Director, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Dawson	Claire	Ocean Wise
Dennis	Robert	Chief at Huu-ay-aht
Dick	Carmen	Songhess Nation
Dixon	Sydney	Pacific Wild
Dolomount	Mark	Executive Director, Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board
Dosanj	Aman	Owner/operator/chef
Doyle	Chelsea	Facilitator
Dumond	Rhys	Legislative Assistant for the FOPO Committee
Eadie	Megan	Area A Association
Edwards	Dan	Area A Crab, retired fisherman
Evans	Corky	Former Fisheries Minister
Evanson	Melissa	Consultant
Fader	Brooke	Slow Fish
Fiegenbaum	Hannah	Communications, T Buck Suzuki
Finn	Maureen	DFO
Frenkel	Caitlin	T Buck Suzuki
Fukasaku	Dai	Chef, promotes locally caught BC seafood
Gerrard	Kyle	Activist/food and beverage industry
Grey	Erin	West Coast Environmental Law
Hardie	Ken	FOPO Committee 2023
Harper	Sarah	UBC Oceans

Hellbach	Debra	Vancouver Island University
Hepworth	Allison	Skipper Otto
Hereema	Dylan	Ecotrust Canada
Hill-Allan	Liam	Communications, UFAWU
Hills	Bretton	Clam harvester
Hoover	Carie	Coastal First Nations GBI
Hughes	Robert	Councillor / Fisherman
Humchit	Leona	Heiltsuk First Nation
Humchitt	Thomas	Fisherman
Irving	Bridget	Songhees Nation
Johnson	Larry	NTC
Johnson	Stacy	Chef
Johnston	Guy	UFAWU-Unifor GEB, fisherman
Kariya	Paul	Coastal First Nations, Policy Advisor
Kennedy	Susanne	
Kwachka	Alexus	Fisherman, Tookalook Ilc
Lake	Victoria	Canadian Seafood Processing Inc.
Lawson	Art	Fish Harvester
Lawson	Shalaine	Fish Harvester
Lotz	Minette	Chef
Lough	Shannon	Communications, Ecotrust Canada
Louis	Kyle	Fish Harvester
MacDonald	Dean	Fisherman, commercial gillnetter north coast, UFAWU-Unifor
MacEwan	Alexa	Operations Manager, Skipper Otto
Mack	James	Assistant Deputy Minister, Water, Fisheries and Coastal Policy and Planning
Mackay	Dave	Fish Harvester
Mactavish	Quinn	
Marcotte	Barry	Fish Harvester
Marshall	Natasha	Native Fishing Association, Business Support Officer
Martinelli	Bruce	Fisherman, Owner Operator
Martinelli	Pilar	Fisherman
Martinelli	Rex	Deckhand, B and S Fishing
McIssac	Jim	T Buck Suzuki

Meggs	Geoff	Media, Contributing Editor, <i>West Coast Now</i>
Michelson	Richard	Fish Harvester
Miller	David	Fisherman, Ha'oom Fisheries Society
Nadeau	Morlely	Fish Harvester
Neuman	Peter	Fish Harvester
Olsen	Kim	Fish Harvester
Olson	Andy	CEO Nuu-chah-nulth Seafood
Olson	Andy	Fish Harvester
Orr	Emily	Advocate Commercial Fish Harvesters
Paterson	Paul	Coastal Nations Fisheries LP
Paton	Jen	Ecotrust Canada
Policnick	Peter	Fisherman
Policnick	Tami	Administration
Pond	Herb	Mayor of Prince Rupert
Pritchard	Heather	Foodlands Cooperative, Formerly Slow Food Canada Prez
Pyde	Alaina	T. Buck Suzuki
Roberts	Tony	President NBBC
Rumsey	Chuck	Ecotrust Canada
Samels	Renee	Ecotrust Canada
Sebelium	Helen	
Short	Charles	Executive Director, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Silver	Jennifer	Researcher, academic
Skene	Mike	Director of a PICFI CFE - Retired
Sonnenberg	Gary	Commercial fisherman
Sparrow	Jarred	Fish Harvester
Stannard	Mack	Filmmaker
Steinem	Michael	Fish Harvester
Stevens	John	Fisherman
Stewart	Madison	
Strobel	Sonia	Skipper Otto
Sutcliffe	Tasha	Ecotrust Canada
Tait	Andrew	Councillor / Fisherman

Tarkanen	Jory	Fish Harvester
Taylor	Jessica	Fish Harvester
Travia	David	Executive Director of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Wild Salmon Branch for Provincial Government
Trojand	Celine	Ecotrust Canada
Turner	Micheal	Director of Policy for fisheries, Aquaculture and Wild Salmon Branch of Prov. Gov.
Verbrugge	Mica	Owner-Operator, Effingham Oysters Inc.
Wadhams	Brian	Fisherman
Walker	Nate	Ecotrust Canada
Wardle	Rebecca	Senior Policy Analyst, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship
Webb	Dawn	UFAWU-Unifor
Weymer	Racheal	Ecotrust Canada
Whetstone	Trish	BC Young Fishermen
Wulff	Harold	Fisherman, Safety Advisor

Policymakers, Provincial MLAs and Federal MPs

Attended either the Gathering and/or the Seafood Gala

Last Name	First Name	Position	Party
Anderson	Brittny	MLA Nelson - Creston	BC NDP
Babchuck	Michele	MLA North Island	BC NDP
Banman	Bruce	MLA Abbotsford South	BC Liberal Party
Brar	Jagrup	Minister of State for Trade, MLA Surrey Fleetwood	
Chant	Susie	MLA North Vancouver - Seymour	BC NDP
Chow	George	Minister of State for Trade, MLA Vancouver-Fraserview	BC NDP
Cullen	Nathan	Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, MLA Stikine	BC NDP
Davies	Dan	MLA Peace River North	BC Liberal Party
Donnelly	Fin	MLA Coquitlam-Burke Mountain	BC NDP
Ferstenau	Sonia	MLA Cowichan Valley	BC Green Party
Greene	Kelly	MLA Richmond Steveston	BC NDP
Heyman	George	Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, MLA Vancouver-Fairview	BC NDP
Lee	Michael	MLA Vancouver - Langara	BC Liberal Party
Mercier	Andrew	Minister of State for Workforce Development, MLA Langley	BC NDP
Oakes	Coralee	MLA Cariboo North	BC Liberal Party
Osborne	Josie	Minister of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation, MLA Mid Island - Pacific Rim	BC NDP
Paton	Ian	MLA Delta South	BC Liberal Party
Robinson	Selina	Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, MLA Coquitlam - Maillardville	BC NDP
Simons	Nicholas	MLA Powell River - Sunshine Coast	BC NDP

Singh	Aman	MLA Richmond - Queensborough	BC NDP
Stewart	Ben	MLA Westside - Kelowna	BC Liberal Party
	Staff Member	Staff of Minister Cullen	BC NDP
	Staff Member	Staff of Minister Heyman	BC NDP
	Staff Member	Staff of Minister Mercier	BC NDP
	Staff Member	Staff of Minister Osborne	BC NDP
	Staff Member	Staff of MLA Simons	BC NDP

“Last week I read a position paper on pacific commercial fisheries licencing policy. This is a consensus document of community groups, First Nations, and fishermen ... this document is a miracle. The bringing together of these historically divided interests is a work of monumental genius and labour ... In politics this event would be called an open window ... I say to the elected people, change happens now, or like me, go home and wrestle with your regrets”

Corky Evans

Former BC Minister of Fisheries

Appendix B: Owner-Operator Policy Position Paper

This owner-operator policy paper has been developed by several organizations in British Columbia including the Coastal First Nations and UFAWU-Unifor. The position paper was presented at the third Fisheries for Communities Gathering by Paul Kariya, Senior Policy Advisor for Coastal First Nations, and Guy Johnston, Secretary-Treasurer, United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union.

Position Paper on Pacific Region Commercial Fisheries Licensing Policy

Wild fisheries can be one of the most sustainable sources of protein on the planet. However, rising populations and vulnerable food systems are growing the demand and value, while access is being increasingly limited. For fish harvesters and fishing communities around the world, the value is much more than economic; there are also significant intangible social, ecosystem and cultural values. Yet, coastal communities are being disconnected from adjacent fisheries.

The current commercial fisheries licensing policy in Canada's Pacific does not support working fish harvesters and coastal communities – it undermines efforts to sustain and build viable fishing enterprises and rewarding careers for residents of the coast. With the current licensing policy, community access to the wealth generated from adjacent waters is greatly limited, making efforts by the Provincial, First Nations, and local Governments to build thriving resilient coastal communities ever more challenging. It also greatly impedes the ability to fully realize the goals of resource reconciliation agreements between Canada and First Nations.

In Section 2.5, Canada's new Fisheries Act calls for, among other key considerations in decision making, 'consideration of social, economic, and cultural factors in the management of fisheries'. In Atlantic Canada licensing policies are developed to protect the interests of coastal communities and independent harvesting enterprises, and in doing so strengthen socio-economic and cultural outcomes in the region. These policies have recently been put into regulations to further ensure that, in Atlantic Canada, independent harvesters, First Nations, and coastal communities are primary recipients of the economic and social

benefits derived from harvesting seafood. The same protective measures in policy and regulations needs to be put in place for BC.

We are committed to working together to ensure that the benefits generated from west coast commercially harvested fish stay with working fish harvesters, First Nations, and adjacent communities, contributing to resilience, prosperity, and wellbeing for this coast and for the province.

To this end, we call on the Government of Canada, to work with BC First Nations, the Provincial Government, local Governments, and harvester organizations, to implement a transition to a Pacific Region Commercial fisheries policy framework and licensing system that ensures licence and quota ownership and use by working fish harvesters and First Nations communities.

- This policy applies to commercial allocations which are separate and distinct from rights- based access, and this transition must respect Indigenous rights and treaties, UNDRIP, and be consistent

with Reconciliation Agreements, Treaties and other constructive arrangements with First Nations.

- The transition must address the same policy objectives for Pacific Region as are now in affect for commercial fisheries on Canada's Atlantic coast, i.e.: *to preserve and protect the independence of licence holders in commercial inshore¹ fisheries and [ensure] that the economic benefits from fishing stay with harvesters and within their communities.**
- The transition plan should immediately address the following recommendations of the May 2019 Report of the House of Commons Fisheries Committee (FOPO), [West Coast Fisheries: Sharing Risks and Benefits](#):
 - Stopping future sales of quotas and licences to non-Canadians.
 - Transparency of beneficial ownership of quotas and licences.
 - Financially incentivize independent fish harvester ownership of licences and quotas.
 - Transition plan developed

1 As stated in the Policy for Preserving the Independence of the Inshore Fleet in Canada's Atlantic Fisheries, "Inshore refers to the fishing sector where fish harvesters are restricted to using vessels less than 19.8m (65') Length Over All (LOA)". This term is not currently used in B.C. <https://www.canada.ca/en/fisheries-oceans/news/2020/12/minister-jordan-strengthens-protections-for-inshore-commercial-fish-harvesters-on-east-coast-keeping-economic-benefits-in-coastal-communities.html>

2 <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/piifcaf-policy-politique-pifpcca-eng.htm>

through extensive, authentic and meaningful engagement

- Regulation of leasing costs during transition.
- In line with recommendation #14 from the May 2019 FOPO report, the transition plan must be developed by Canada, BC, and First Nations through extensive, authentic and transparent engagement with working fish harvesters, coastal communities, and other industry stakeholders.
- Following a similar process and timeframe used in the Preserving the Independence of Inshore Fleet in Canada's Atlantic Fisheries² (PIIFCAF) policy process, the transition should be pursued primarily through market-based transactions involving willing sellers and willing buyers.
- The transition should be implemented over a limited period, no more than 7 years as in the PIIFCAF case, that allows current license and quota holders to recover their investments, does not contribute to excessive price inflation, and allows purchasers to finance their acquisitions at rates that support long-term enterprise viability.
- The transition plan should include measures to protect the interests

of working fish harvesters who may be negatively impacted by these changes. Due to highly inflated licence and quota prices and restricted fishing opportunities, many working harvesters currently must rely on leasing licenses and quota to make a living and sustain their enterprises.

- The transition strategy should include new policies and programs to facilitate labour force rebuilding and pathways for new entrants to become enterprise owner-operators including community tools to support access transition, affordable financing options tailored to the industry like the fisheries loan boards now in place in other jurisdictions.

Immediate steps for implementing a transition

- A clear policy commitment from the DFO Minister, to work with the Province, and First Nations to collaboratively develop and implement a stakeholder engagement and transition planning process for a new Pacific Region licensing regime in which commercial fishing licences and quotas will transition to owner-operator or First Nation ownership and control.

- The process should have an agreed upon timeframe that shows a meaningful commitment to immediate implementation, including a clearly defined timeline for transition (no more than seven years, modelled after the PIIFCAF option).
- As an immediate step in this transition, an owner/operator (o/o) class of licence should be designated to align Pacific Region licensing policy and regulations with Atlantic Region inshore fisheries. Key components of this new license class will include:
 - Until the transition to a new licensing policy is completed, entering a licence into this class will be voluntary.
 - As is the case in Atlantic Canada, First Nation owned licences under the communal commercial class are, and will remain, exempt from the development of this new o/o licence class and its associated rules and conditions.
 - Transferability between communal commercial and owner-operator licences that will need to be addressed to promote reconciliation objectives with First Nations, and provide stability to owner-operators. A detailed proposal for designating this new o/o licence class “Promoting Independent Harvesters in Canada’s Pacific Fisheries” developed by the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union.
- Once transition objectives are determined, a transparent, comprehensive, and collaborative review and engagement process for each fishery must be conducted to determine how to execute a full transition to the two main categories of licence – the new owner/operator for harvester owned licences, and commercial communal for Nation owned licences which would remain exempt from the owner/operator policy. Keystakeholders to be “transparently and authentically” engaged in this process are listed in FOPO recommendation #14 ([see report](#)).

Appendix C: Fisheries for Communities Gathering 2.0 (2020)

FINAL OUTCOMES and the FFC 2.0 CONSENSUS

Despite decades of divisive policies that have fractured the industry and the region and undermined the viability of independent fishing enterprises and coastal communities, participants with diverse interests came to a consensus at the Gathering on the need to move forward with real and immediate action.

There was consensus in the room that the Federal Government needs to formally respond to and act on the recommendations of the May 2019 FOPO Report: “West Coast Fisheries: Sharing Risks and Benefits”.

Further, the Province of BC must become a real partner with the Federal Government to achieve needed change in BC fisheries, starting with establishing a Provincial Ministry for Fisheries.

The Gathering participants agreed that all 20 FOPO recommendations are relevant and need to be considered, but certain recommendations are especially critical and should receive special priority.

Recommendations 2, 4, 8, & 19 were identified as urgent and should be acted on immediately to move toward better fisheries outcomes.

#2: Stopping future sales of quotas and licences to non-Canadians.

#8: Financially incentivize independent fish harvester ownership of licences and quotas.

#19: Regulation of leasing costs during transition.

#4: Transparency of beneficial ownership of quotas and licences.

Through a voting process, participants prioritized these four FOPO recommendations as a starting point for recapturing a fairer share of the wealth of our marine environment to benefit coastal communities, First Nations, and working harvesters.

Participants identified FOPO recommendations 14 & 15 as critically important for ensuring an effective and principled process for achieving major reform of fisheries licensing policies.

#14: New policy framework developed through authentic and transparent engagement with active harvesters from each fishery/fleet, First Nations, non-fishing licence/quota holders and processors.

#15: Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada established an independent commission, to

look at options, including a fair-share system and licensing transition options.

Participants agreed that FOPO recommendations 18 & 20 set out foundational principles to guide all Fisheries

and Oceans Canada's work and policies.

#18: Take account of needs, rights, capacities, and framework for reconciliation.

#20: DFO needs to work to achieve its five objectives – conservation, legal obligations, stability and economic viability, and fair distribution of benefits.

Concerted DFO action on FOPO recommendations 14, 15, 18, and 20 will ensure a fair, principled, and structured path forward in this process for all parties involved. Acting on them will help achieve the changes needed to ensure a better future for BC fisheries and those individuals and communities reliant on them.

FOPO Recommendations 3 & 9 are priorities for enabling attraction and retention of much needed young new entrants to the commercial fishery.

#3: Unmarrying licences.

#9: Loan and mentorship programs for new entrants. These two recommendations were seen as important for easing the path to greater local access to, and independent ownership of, fisheries access.

MOVING FORWARD

At the conclusion of the Gathering, participants moved to form a Fisheries for Communities Action Committee to ensure that the knowledge, passion, and consensus generated during the conference continues to be heard and acted upon. Their goal is to press the Federal Government and the Provincial Government into action in a timely, inclusive, and effective manner.

Ten individuals volunteered to form this committee including 8 active fishermen, 1 small processor, and 1 NGO.

Concerted DFO action on the FOPO recommendations, supported by an actively engaged provincial government, will benefit British Columbia and Canada by ensuring that greater shares of the benefits from commercial fisheries stay local and flow to active BC fish harvesters, First Nations, and coastal communities.

Appendix D: Fisheries for Communities Gathering 1.0 (2018)

FINAL OUTCOMES and the CONSENSUS

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

A. 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 hemes for the reform process.

B. 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.



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