



The Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

THE MANAGEMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS IN CANADA'S WESTERN ARCTIC

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Recommendations

The Commercial Char Fishery

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that an intergovernmental DFO–Nunavut working group be established to develop a strategy for the development of Nunavut's Arctic char fisheries, including the fishery on Victoria Island, for the social and economic benefits that increased fishing activity could generate, but also to reinforce Canada's presence and sovereignty in the region.

The Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada provide the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation with adequate ways and means to upgrade equipment and modernize its fish processing operations to ensure the future of the commercial freshwater sector in western Canada.

The Great Slave Lake Commercial Fishery

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in concert with fishery stakeholders, including the NWT Fishermen's Federation, the Great Slave Lake Advisory Committee and the Government of the Northwest Territories, formulate and fund a comprehensive strategy to revitalize the commercial fishery on Great Slave Lake. The plan should facilitate the entry of young Aboriginal fishers who may be attracted to the industry as a way of preserving a traditional way of life.

Research

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans substantially increase its research funding in the western Arctic. The Department should commit to funding a multi-year, multi-species ecosystem research program in the region. A major objective of the Department should be the collection of baseline data.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans undertake research in the Beaufort Sea to determine what species of fish have the potential for commercial development.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends, as a general principle, that Aboriginal traditional ecological knowledge – as an indispensable complement to scientific knowledge – always be given full and early consideration in decision-making processes, including assessments made by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

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Monitoring in the Mackenzie Valley Watershed**Recommendation 7**

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada make available sufficient, long-term, stable funding to implement the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program, as recommended by the Mackenzie Gas Project Joint Review Panel.

Recommendation 8

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada ensure that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' fish habitat program in the western Arctic is adequately funded.

Development in Marine Areas**Recommendation 9**

The Committee recommends that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in concert with the Inuvialuit, develop an agreement giving the Inuvialuit a key role in deciding any future commercial fishing activity in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, including the allocation of commercial fish quotas.

Recommendation 10

The Committee recommends that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans expedite its approval of the Tarium Niryutait Marine Protected Area. The Department should also provide the Fisheries Joint Management Committee with sufficient resources to administer the MPA.

Recommendation 11

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada provide the Department of Fisheries and Oceans with the funding it needs to fully implement the Department's integrated planning initiatives in the western Arctic.

Canada–US Bilateral Issues**Recommendation 12**

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada, in concert with the Inuvialuit, develop a policy regarding future fishing activity in the Beaufort Sea. In this regard, Canada should consider instituting a moratorium on commercial fishing in the Beaufort Sea (similar to the US Arctic Fishery Management Plan) on the Canadian side of the maritime border between Alaska and Yukon, west of the 141st meridian.

Recommendation 13

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada continue to work through the Yukon River Panel to further reduce the marine by-catch of Yukon River chinook salmon by the US pollock fishery.

Recommendation 14

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada engage the United States in bilateral discussions on the possibility of developing a complementary Canada–US approach to ecosystem-based management in the Beaufort Sea.





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Increase support for commercial freshwater fisheries in Canada's western Arctic says report by Senate Fisheries and Oceans Committee

Ottawa (May 27, 2010) – Fisheries for the renowned Arctic char and other species in the Western Arctic merit further development, but this must be underpinned by thorough research and full involvement by Inuvialuit and First Nations, says a report by the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

“Although eclipsed by the much larger fisheries on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, Canada's northern commercial fisheries generate economic activity where there are few other opportunities,” says Senator Bill Rompkey, Chair of the committee. “Two important challenges are isolation and the high cost of transporting products to southern markets.”

The committee recommends that an intergovernmental Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)–Nunavut working group develop a strategy to expand the Arctic char fisheries. Growth including at Victoria Island could improve social and economic outcomes and reinforce Canada's sovereign presence.

The committee also calls for a comprehensive strategy to revitalize the commercial fishery on Great Slave Lake. DFO should collaborate with fishery stakeholders and territorial bodies to formulate and fund the strategy. A key element would be facilitating the entry of young Aboriginal fishers to the industry.

“Aboriginal people who depend on the land and on the sea for providing economic and social well-being see ‘sustainable development’ as more than a buzz phrase; they see it is a matter of survival,” says Senator Dennis Patterson, Deputy Chair of the committee. “Economic benefits from an expanded fishery also create important social benefits for communities.”

As single-desk seller for freshwater commercial fish harvested in most of western Canada, the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation provides access to domestic and international markets for small and isolated fishing communities. Equipment upgrades and the modernization of processing plant operations are necessary to ensure future operations. The report entitled: [The Management of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada's Western Arctic](#) calls on the Government of Canada to provide the FFMC with adequate assistance to help the sector grow in the years to come.

For ocean waters of the Western Arctic, the report recommends expediting approval of the Tarium Niryutait Marine Protected Area. And the Government of Canada and the Inuvialuit should develop a policy regarding commercial fishing in the Beaufort Sea, and consider a moratorium similar to that applied by the United States in Arctic waters.

To read the full report and learn more about the activities of the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans visit the committee website:

www.senate-senat.ca/fopo.asp

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