

## **Fraser Forum 1 – Day 3 Tier 2 Internal Summary (First Nations Concerns)**

This internal-only Tier 2 summary synthesizes the core concerns, gaps, and explicit messages First Nations directed to DFO during Fraser Forum 1. It is intended to ensure these positions are accurately understood, reflected, and acted upon. The language intentionally retains the strength, urgency, and clarity expressed by First Nations and is not drafted for public release.

### **1. Fundamental Disagreement on UNDRIP / UNDA Implementation**

First Nations clearly stated that they do not agree with DFO's comments regarding UNDRIP / UNDA implementation timelines. The length of time being taken to operationalize commitments was described as unacceptable. Any suggestion that progress is sufficient or reasonable was explicitly rejected and must not be implied in summaries or presentations.

### **2. Priority Rights vs. Recreational Privilege**

First Nations emphasized that the framing of priority rights relative to recreational fisheries must be corrected. This issue is not a neutral policy debate; it is an outrage. Recreational fishing is a privilege, while First Nations fisheries are constitutionally protected rights. Presentations and summaries must clearly reflect this distinction and the depth of concern expressed by First Nations.

### **3. Recreational Fisheries Mortality**

First Nations stated unequivocally that sport sector mortalities must be included in recreational catch numbers. Release mortality is substantial and, in some cases, approaches or equals retained harvest. The ratio of releases to kept fish—often approaching three-to-one—means recreational activity itself is a major driver of mortality and must be fully accounted for.

### **4. Infringement Exists Regardless of Proportional Impact**

First Nations rejected the idea that priority is met simply because their fisheries experience a higher proportion of total impacts. Any restriction on First Nations fisheries constitutes an infringement and requires justification. DFO is perceived as supporting and protecting recreational fishing activity and harvest while failing to protect fish for First Nations fisheries. This undermines priority and must be addressed.

### **5. Chinook Management vs. Sockeye Management**

Participants questioned why Chinook management differs so fundamentally from Sockeye management. Sockeye frameworks, while imperfect, attempt to manage transparently to conservation and priority. Chinook management was described as lacking clear rules, metrics, and accountability, resulting in repeated rights infringements.

## **6. Lack of Metrics for Spring 5(2) Chinook**

There are no clear metrics defining conservation needs or First Nations needs for Spring 5(2) Chinook that would allow meaningful implementation of the Sparrow decision. This gap prevents transparent decision-making and must be addressed.

## **7. Northern, Alaskan, and Transboundary Fisheries**

First Nations identified a significant gap in discussions around Northern and Alaskan fisheries and their impacts on Fraser stocks. This issue is not adequately addressed at the FSMB and must be placed on the agenda. Related to this, First Nations noted that while domestic conversations occur around Pacific Salmon Treaty chapters, Canada is not effectively advancing these positions at a bilateral level with the United States, and PST renewal has not meaningfully commenced.

## **8. Data Gaps and Information Requests to DFO**

Specific data requests were raised, including:

- Mark-selective fisheries data;
- Impacts on Canadian Columbia stocks;
- DFO's written interpretation of priority management;
- Information related to the Nechako River train derailment and monitoring response.

The absence of this information undermines trust and informed decision-making.

## **9. Presentation Quality and Forum Process**

First Nations noted the clear difference between presentations that articulate objectives, performance measures, and outcomes (e.g., Adam Keizer's presentation) and Chinook presentations that lack this structure. DFO presentations must move away from recycled consultation materials. The Forum Planning Committee should review presentations in advance to ensure they seek guided advice and result in clear, actionable next steps. Outstanding "What We Heard" actions must be tracked and followed up at subsequent Forums.

## **10. FSMC Governance and Decision-Making**

First Nations expressed that the current operation of FSMC does not reflect the original intent of its formation. There is little evidence of First Nations' hands in decision-making. Reconciliation without truth is insufficient, and there is no record of First Nations signing away authority over fisheries management. Continuation of paternalistic Crown control is unacceptable. First Nations perspectives, laws, and holistic relationships with fish must be embedded in management moving forward.

## **11. Clear Expectations Going Forward**

First Nations expect DFO to:

- Correctly reflect disagreement on UNDRIP / UNDA timelines;
- Clearly distinguish rights from privileges in all communications;
- Fully account for recreational mortality;
- Justify any infringement on First Nations fisheries;

- Address Chinook management gaps with transparent metrics;
- Bring transboundary and Northern fisheries impacts onto formal agendas;
- Improve presentation quality and accountability;
- Treat FSMC as a true decision-making partner.