

2026 Fraser Forum 2 – Day 2 Executive Summary

February 25, 2026

Focus: Sockeye Escapement Planning, Coho & Chum Options

Purpose of Day 2

Day 2 Tier 2 discussions focused on refinement of Fraser sockeye escapement plan options for 2026, followed by policy-level discussions on Southern BC coho exploitation and chum management thresholds.

Sockeye Escapement Planning – 2026 Options

- Three co-developed escapement plan options were presented (Escapement-weighted, Harvest-weighted, Hybrid).
- Overall TAM framework remains unchanged; parameter adjustments occur within existing structure.
- Hybrid option includes potential variable LAER (10–20%), requiring clear preseason criteria and in-season triggers.
- Emphasis placed on developing clearer performance metrics and retrospective analyses to support option selection.
- Trade-offs highlighted between window-closure length (3–5 weeks) and harvest opportunity.
- Environmental stressors (drought, en-route mortality) remain significant risk factors requiring precaution.

Southern BC Coho – Domestic Exploitation Options

- Current domestic management maintains a 3–5% exploitation rate (ER) for Interior Fraser coho.
- Option 1 maintains 3–5% ER and current fishery structure.
- Option 2 increases domestic ER toward 8–10% (within Treaty 10% ceiling) to improve flexibility for FSC and sockeye fisheries.
- Forum feedback reflects divided views: conservation stability versus increased domestic access.
- Concerns raised regarding limited data for Strait of Georgia coho and risk tolerance.
- Treaty dynamics noted: unused Canadian ER does not necessarily result in conservation if U.S. harvest remains at 10%.

Southern BC Chum – Threshold Alignment

- Participants flagged need to revisit historical productivity-based breakpoints.
- Concern raised regarding disconnect between Inner South Coast 1M critical threshold and Fraser 800K escapement goal.
- Suggestion to align trigger mechanisms to ensure Fraser escapement objectives are met before

fisheries proceed.

- DFO acknowledged bilateral discussions with the U.S. to clarify 'critical year' definitions.

Emerging Direction

Across Day 2 discussions, there was alignment on:

- Strengthening performance metrics and transparency;
- Clarifying objectives versus implementation ranges;
- Improving integration between conservation thresholds and fishery triggers;
- Balancing precaution with meaningful First Nations access;
- Continuing movement toward more structured, co-developed planning processes.

Day 2 concluded with transition to Tier 1 deliberations to further refine First Nations perspectives on escapement, coho exploitation, and chum threshold alignment.