



## FCC points to socio-economic considerations for Marine Protected Areas

OTTAWA, July 6, 2018 – The Fisheries Council of Canada (FCC) today appeared before the National Advisory Panel on Marine Protected Area Standards and urged the Panel to incorporate socio-economic considerations in its recommendations to the federal government.

The national Advisory Panel was established in October 2017 to offer recommendations to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans on categories and associated standards for federal Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). In carrying out its work, the Panel has been seeking the perspectives of Canadians regarding values, aspirations, and interests relating to MPAs as a tool for ocean conservation and management. The Panel is to submit an interim presentation to the Minister in mid-August and a full report in mid-September.

Paul Lansbergen, FCC President, said “Our primary concern is how Canada balances the desire to conserve and protect our ocean ecosystem while still generating much needed economic benefits from our fish resources.” He continued, “Canada wants economic growth for all, including coastal communities, but it also wants to protect our oceans. It is difficult to do in all areas.”

FCC made four recommendations that recognize and build on existing elements of the processes for establishing individual MPAs and a broader network. However, the driver for these recommendations is to enhance the effort to strike the appropriate balance between conservation and socio-economic benefits.

The four recommendations were:

1. Use science-based decision making which recognizes the role of the fisheries sector in sustainable fisheries management and contributing to a healthy ocean ecosystem;
2. Incorporate the socio-economic consideration which recognizes the economic importance of the fisheries sector and other users;
3. Take a flexible approach in selecting the right conservation tool for the situation – regardless of it being under the Oceans Act, Fisheries Act, or other authority; and,
4. Consider the recent Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans report on Marine Protected Areas. Many of its 24 recommendations can be incorporated into the recommendations of the Panel.

“We are a partner on marine conservation efforts. We understand the imperative of conserving and protecting the ocean ecosystem. Sustainability is paramount for our long-term prosperity. But we have to openly consider the socio-economic implications and do it right to be effective.”, Lansbergen said.

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The Canadian seafood industry creates 80,000 direct jobs, mainly in coastal and rural communities, and accounts for \$6.6 billion in exports. Two-thirds of Canada's wild capture seafood production (80 per cent by value) is certified by the Marine Stewardship Council. This puts Canada among the leaders globally when put in the context of only about 10% of the world's fisheries being certified.

Since the Fisheries Council of Canada was established in 1915, the Council has been the national voice for Canada's commercial fisheries. Our members include small, medium and larger-sized companies along with Indigenous enterprises that harvest fish in Canada's three oceans and inland waters. Member companies are also processors who process the majority of Canada's fish and seafood production. FCC members take pride in being key employers in their communities, providing jobs and creating an economic base for other local businesses.

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