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Canadian Lobster, Snow Crab Remain Responsible Choices

OTTAWA, ON: The Fisheries Council of Canada (FCC), as the national association representing Canadian seafood, stands in continued support of the Canadian lobster and snow crab sectors in the face of the new rating of “red/avoid” by Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Seafood Watch program. FCC is confident in the sustainability and ongoing dedication to innovation that the Canadian lobster and snow crab fisheries demonstrate, and are proud to promote their products as a responsible choice.

The vast majority of snow crab and lobster fisheries in Canada remain certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) as the global standard and are committed to stewardship of vulnerable species. Significant attention is given to gear innovation and best practices for the protection of marine mammals. By contrast, it is important to note that Seafood Watch is not subject to any significant level of third-party review and do not meet any global best practices such as the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI).

“Our lobster and snow crab members are subject to some of the highest federal standards for sustainability and marine mammal protection in the world, and have voluntarily gone above and beyond to certify the sustainability of their fisheries against the global best standard of the MSC,” said Paul Lansbergen, President, FCC. “By all accounts, Canadian lobster and snow crab remain responsible choices.”

Under federal guidance, Canada has implemented significant management measures to mitigate marine mammal interactions in all Canadian Atlantic fixed-gear fisheries. Canadian fisheries work diligently to constantly reduce harm to marine mammals as part of their sustainability programming and to maintain market access. Beyond this, the only snow crab fishery in Atlantic Canada that is not MSC certified is in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. That fishery has moved into a very robust Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) focused on advancing new gear technology to reduce/eliminate the entanglement of right whales in the snow crab fishery.

“In fact, the pace of innovation with popup buoys in both the lobster and snow crab fisheries is unprecedented. Continuing to buy Canadian lobster and snow crab will support these innovation efforts,” said Lansbergen.

As a whole, the Canadian seafood industry boasts some of the best sustainability metrics in the world. The federal department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada reports that [98 per cent of Canadian fisheries](#) are harvested at sustainable levels, and our sector holds the second-highest rate of MSC sustainability certifications among large countries globally.

-30-

The Fisheries Council of Canada (FCC) is the voice of Canada’s wild capture fish and seafood industry, promoting a healthy resource and prosperous industry playing a vital role in the Canadian economy. Our members include small, medium and larger-sized companies along with Indigenous enterprises that harvest and process fish from Canada’s three oceans.

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