

# CHAPTER 34

## Dialogue following Policy and Legislative Initiatives

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### **International considerations of the endangered species status**

*Otto Langer* directed his comments to Carol Eros. It is his understanding that Cultus Lake sockeye runs are in dire straits and he is concerned that we would expose that fishery to a full fledged fishery with exploitation rates of 25% in 2003. He referred to her description of the protection of Cultus Lake sockeye as a priority but noted that it seems to be a slipping priority already. Canada has not worked out how COSEWIC or SARA will fit into the international treaty with the US and moreover, in the discussions for the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan, US counterparts have rejected recognition of the threatened status of Cultus Lake runs and have indicated this is really a domestic issue and, therefore, as the sockeye come through, they can exploit as high as 20% as agreed upon in the draft plan. Canadian fishermen will then have to make the sacrifices to allow more of the Cultus Lake fish through the fishery. In his opinion, there seem to be some real flaws and the priority should have been on the 2003 fishery. He posed the question: How do you relate SARA and COSEWIC to an international treaty? Why aren't we moving sooner and how do we address those concerns?

*Carole Eros* replied that she could not specifically respond to the fisheries' management decisions in terms of Cultus Lake and the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan at this stage but could only comment on what the plans are for the implementation of the Cultus Lake sockeye recovery plan and the timelines of how that would occur under SARA.

*Donna Darm* commented that they have asked themselves the same question in the US, because there are numerous fisheries in Canada, particularly off the west coast of Vancouver Island, that harvest threatened and endangered Puget Sound and Columbia River fish. She noted that this is a dialogue they would be very interested in having.

*Brian Riddell* noted that there are three specific examples under the Pacific Salmon Treaty that he knows of that when Canada was asked to assist with particular conservation concerns, they assisted. In his opinion, we should try to cooperate on this and this is an important dialogue that should be followed up on.

*David Cunnington* addressed the question about trans-boundary management and the Species At Risk Act. He commented that this is an important issue and it is a gap that is recognized in a number of different organizations. Now that there are negotiations between the two governments, US and Canada, at the National Office level, there is a discussion paper on how to manage species at risk across boundaries.

*Don Lawseth* commented that the cooperation will likely be at the recovery team level. He noted that they (DFO) did this with the sea otter recovery team where they invited experts from the US to participate - they found that relationship very rewarding and they synchronized their recovery approaches with those of Washington State, and Alaska to some degree. He believes that that is the level where the cooperation will happen.

**Is habitat restoration required under the Act as well as habitat protection?**

*Wayne Harling* commented that under the recovery section there is a requirement for protection of habitat, but he was unsure whether there is also a requirement for restoration of habitat, which may be the reason the sockeye species is on the endangered list in the first place. He noted that the minister said “may” allow activity affecting the species. He posed the question: Must the action plan require habitat restoration or does it merely mandate identification of habitat?

*Carole Eros* explained that right now it requires the identification and protection of the critical habitat, so if the critical habitat is identified, it is a requirement in the recovery strategy and action plan to protect it. If the recovery strategy identifies habitat restoration as one of the primary threats and in need of restoration, then that would be identified and included.

*Wayne Harling* commented that he did not see it listed as ‘mandatory’ and *Carole Eros* agreed that it is not ‘mandatory’. Mr. Harling replied that without it being ‘mandatory’ it is meaningless.

**Positive aspects of SARA**

*Jeff Hutchings* commented as a member of COSEWIC, and noted that the current discussion has been focusing on the negative rather than on identifying some of the positive things that have resulted from SARA. He has been very concerned about conservation from a variety of perspectives and applauded the fact that the Species At Risk Act has been proclaimed. Among the many positive aspects coming out of SARA, particularly for aquatic species, is the legal listing process. He noted that the COSEWIC list is made public at the end of each COSEWIC meeting so that the Canadian society knows what this independent science body feels about each of the species in question. Society can then assess the appropriateness of not ‘listing’ species, should the Governor in Council decide not to do so.

He noted two other good things about SARA, notwithstanding the species production measures: first, there is a requirement for recovery targets and recovery targets have to be identified in the recovery strategies. If we go back to the Atlantic cod situation and a number of marine fish issues, we lack recovery targets and we have not had any since those fisheries were closed. In his opinion, that has been the single biggest problem facing us in identifying responsible management strategies. His second point is to do with the habitat side and he made reference to marine fish. SARA indicates that if critical habitat is not known for an endangered or threatened species, then the recovery strategy must address that and identify means by which that critical habitat can be identified. This would be of enormous benefit given that we have not got a clue as to what essential habitat is for any marine species.

**Is there a recovery team currently in place for *Bocaccio*?**

*Jeff Hutchings* posed the question to *Carole Eros*: With respect to *Bocaccio*, which was listed as *threatened*, does the Department of Fisheries and Oceans have a recovery team in place for *Bocaccio* at this time?

*Carole Eros* replied that this has been identified as an upcoming need for recovery planning for *Bocaccio*. She noted that there have been some informal discussions taking place about *Bocaccio* with industry and other interests but there has not been a formal recovery team established at this stage.

### **Recovery plan efforts underway in BC**

*Rich Chapple* referred to the presentation by Donna Darm on recovery planning experience in the Pacific Northwest of the US and noted that there is significant progress in recovery planning in British Columbia with the establishment of the Pacific Salmon Endowment Fund in 2001 together with the Pacific Salmon Foundation's efforts to develop recovery planning. They have taken on seven projects in total and have recovery plans completed and are in the process of doing recovery plans for Squamish River, Salmon River, the Thompson Basin and Sakinaw Lake sockeye. He commented that Sakinaw Lake is going to be interesting because as a non-government organization, they will be collaborating extensively with DFO. In regard to the Nimpkish River salmon recovery plan, he noted that it took a number of months to complete and cost \$15,000, and as a result there are already several projects underway. In developing the guiding principles for their recovery planning they learned some lessons fairly quickly and have done some things in a 'Canadian' way; that is, it is an intensely collaborative effort and driven from the bottom up as opposed to the top down. That may explain why they have been able to be fairly expedient.

*Brian Riddell* commented that from his experience, in the southern US, there is an enormous amount of work going on with recovery planning and watersheds and watershed councils and it would be very worthwhile meeting together and sharing these experiences. He believes that in Canada we are probably a little behind but going in the right direction.

### **The Wild Salmon Policy process**

*Wayne Harling* referred to Mark Saunders' presentation and commented that in his opinion there is obviously in-house polarization between science and management on the issues around the Wild Salmon Policy and expressed his concern that if drags on much longer then the final product will bear little relationship to what was discussed during the consultation process. He posed the question: You have described several issues that still must be dealt with but is there one key stumbling block to moving this forward and, if so, what exactly is it?

*Mark Saunders* replied that the critical points are about values and the questions about what it is we are trying to conserve. He believes that there has been a misunderstanding and much of what Noel Wilkins described applies to this situation. A lot of it is about the words of what conservation means; there is a misconception that conservation means 'no fishing'. They are working through the words as to what conservation means and the question about what it is that they are trying to conserve.

*Maurice Coulter-Boisvert* explained that he works with volunteers in the Lower Mainland who, since 1980, have been involved in small scale fish culture operations and, in the face of habitat loss and development, are trying to preserve salmon populations. He believes that most of these volunteers are not particularly concerned with the fact that the salmon are 'wild' and noted that there has been a lot of discussion here about our primary concern that the salmon be 'wild', as opposed to having salmon at all. He expressed his concern that the Wild Salmon Policy will recognize that, so as not to cause the involvement of those 10,000 volunteers as well as potentially 20,000 others involved in watershed stewardship and stream keepers, to back away from their commitment and involvement to the resource by being denied the opportunity because the salmon they are producing are not 'wild'.

*Mark Saunders* noted that it was said earlier that it is a mistake to not engage, in this process, all of the people that are involved and, in particular, the streamkeepers. The advantage that they have here is that such a huge proportion of the population is engaged in this issue. Much of this speaks to the education that needs to be done to bridge the link between the science that is behind the concerns over the wild salmon and what maintaining our genetic diversity brings to it. He believes that we need to be responsible for making sure that we understand the implications of enhancement and the fact that we have made large strides in our application of enhancement. A lot of their concerns come from earlier stages and points in

time when we knew less about the enhancement process. As much as anything, a big part of this is education and engagement.

*Amit Kumar Goel* explained that as a Simon Fraser graduate student who comes from India, Australia and Thailand he came to the summit with an idea to identify key issues. What he has identified is that we all need to have a genuine desire to solve the problem of fisheries around the world and have genuine participation of all the stakeholders. As scientists, or as managers, we need to look at ourselves and what it is we have contributed to this state of affairs and we have to work through that situation.

*Otto Langer* encouraged Mark Saunders to continue to work on the implementation of the wild salmon policy in DFO. He cautioned that this is an agency that has lost a lot of its trust and public respect over the last decade and is suffering low morale, resources cuts and, to some degree, it has created polarization such as in aquaculture and other issues. He noted that in a sense, there is also a need for a pre-plan, which would be a ‘recovery plan’ for DFO before we can make a Wild Salmon Policy work. He believes that over the years, when he was employed by DFO, too much money was spent on salmon and now there is a need to diversify and go into other species. He expressed concern about how this can all be brought together and made to work now, especially considering the limited consultation time and the limited time to start changing the system.

*Mark Saunders* replied that one of the interesting things raised in the workshop is that it will be interesting to see the comparison of how fast science moves, which is where he is based, to a group of larger government bureaucracy that moves just slightly faster than the salmon can actually evolve. He noted that they are taking steps internally to interact across the different branches, sectors and groups to improve communication and decision-making to meet the schedule they have established – an interesting problem is that there is not any part of the department that is not touched by salmon.

#### **A follow up meeting of policy makers**

*Noel Wilkins* observed that during the meeting someone said that it is a pity there aren’t more policy makers present - he believes that it was perhaps quite good that there weren’t because it allowed us to talk frankly and openly. What might be a good idea is that when the proceedings are produced the policy makers in Canada be identified and the nodes in the policy system and a copy of the proceedings be forwarded to them and explain that you propose to have a meeting later in the year called “A Policy Response to the World Summit on Salmon” and invite them to come along. He believes that they might attend and they would give a response and, if they did, then that would give Canada a good grounding and credibility to then extend to the wider continents and look across the Atlantic and encourage the Europeans to establish a policy, such as has been accomplished in Canada. The idea is to have a follow-up meeting of policy makers and include the more Canadian-based important people at this meeting.

#### **Wrap Up Statement – John Pierce**

I am sure that all of us have found this Summit tremendously informative and stimulating and worthy of the title “World Summit”. The prospects for protecting and enhancing species have been enhanced through a better understanding of the long history and experiences of fisheries in numerous regions and jurisdictions and what is clear to me is that, while there are disturbing trends with respect to certain species facing extinction in the Pacific Northwest, we should not confuse trend with destiny – trend is not destiny. We can effect positive change and, while scientific uncertainty exists, it must be reduced particularly over ecological interactions. Many of the current problems have their origins, in my view, in lack of political will and mismanagement including lack of funds for research and inventorying various things in British Columbia. I am reminded, and I have been reminded on several occasions during the Summit, of Homer-Dixon’s book, “The Ingenuity Gap”. He distinguishes between two types of ingenuity: technical ingenuity, which is something that I believe we do very well, and social ingenuity which we are

far less successful at – in other words creating adaptive and novel institutions, organizations and approaches to deal with increasing complex problems that we have created ourselves.

Our challenges, which have been reinforced at this Summit, are to clarify management objectives, to understand trade-offs and the links between ecosystems and socio-economic systems to provide flexible, legal, regulatory frameworks in order to educate the public and to sustain the diversity of this vital public resource for future generations. Without question, habitat stewardship is far more complicated than many of us have realized as is ecosystem planning. Social ingenuity must act as a counter-balance to technical ingenuity and it is precisely because of the existing imbalance between these two, between technical ingenuity and our success at that *vis-à-vis* social ingenuity that this imperils, in my view, the future of salmon fisheries. I will refer back once again to the Honourable John Fraser who has reminded us of the need to provide politicians and decision-makers with guidance through clearer understanding of options, trade-offs and consequences of various actions. This we can do and we do not need perfect information, nor is a scientific certainty a requirement. The momentum that has developed over the last three days is very significant and I would not like to see this lost. We can move forward and the Wild Salmon Policy that has just been discussed is obviously encouraging but we need leadership and we need leadership from many different quarters and not just from politicians and decision-makers. The policy response to the World Summit on Salmon is a worthwhile objective and goal and I would like to see that pursued.

#### **References**

Homer-Dixon, T. 2000. The Ingenuity Gap. A.A. Knopf, New York.

