

Operating Protocol for the Pacific Marine Conservation Caucus (MCC)

Mandate:

The MCC is an officially recognized body which provides the conservation community with a means to participate as a full status “stakeholder” in formal consultations with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). We will develop policy positions in Pacific fisheries and marine conservation to provide input to decision-making processes—i.e. an advisory role.

The MCC will also advise DFO on the need for consultation processes on specific marine issues and on the design and implementation required to ensure effective representation.

The MCC will strive to accurately represent the interests of the marine conservation community. However, the MCC recognizes that there is a diversity of groups working on marine conservation issues in BC and respects the fact that not all interests can be represented by one overarching group. While the primary role of the MCC is to be an advocate for marine conservation, it does not replace the work being carried out by individual MCC member organizations, or outside groups.

Furthermore, the MCC in no way supersedes or eliminates the need for other forms of consultation between the conservation community and DFO, but it does provide an important opportunity for the conservation sector to have a seat at consultation tables—an opportunity already available to sectors such as the commercial and recreational fisheries.

Scope:¹

The MCC will concentrate on themes covered in the Fisheries Act and the Oceans Act, such as:

- Sustainable fisheries management
- Marine conservation

The MCC is focused on fisheries related issues and is participating in DFO consultations on Integrated Harvest Management Plans for the North and South coasts.

Structure and Participants:

MCC Steering Committee

Nine organizations are represented on a Steering Committee that coordinates the MCC (includes calling meetings, budget, contribution agreement, reviewing of committee structure and participation, and other consultation issues). Present MCC Steering Committee:

- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - BC Chapter
- David Suzuki Foundation
- Living Oceans Society
- Pacific Streamkeepers Federation
- Raincoast Conservation Foundation
- SkeenaWild Conservation Trust
- Steelhead Society of British Columbia
- Watershed Watch Salmon Society
- World Wildlife Fund Canada

¹ Policy issues which may be covered include: Wild Salmon Policy, salmon fisheries planning, SARA/COSEWIC, habitat, rockfish, and Integrated Groundfish Management.

MCC Steering Committee Chair

The MCC Steering Committee has a Chair selected from among the Steering Committee organizations:

- Chair: Craig Orr, Watershed Watch Salmon Society

MCC Secretariat

The MCC Secretariat provides administrative support to the Steering Committee and Chair and is the point contact person for the MCC. The secretariat is:

- Trish Hall, Watershed Watch Salmon Society

MCC Committees

The MCC Steering Committee will establish issue-specific committees to fulfill its mandate. Committee participants are drawn broadly from the marine conservation community, subject to review by the MCC Steering Committee. Current, active committees and participant groups are:

| COMMITTEE | MEMBER GROUPS (AND REPRESENTATIVES) *Indicates non-MCC groups |
|---|---|
| Salmon (Wild Salmon Policy, fisheries management, SARA) | David Suzuki Foundation (Jeffery Young) Pacific Streamkeepers Federation (ZoAnn Morten) Raincoast Conservation Foundation (Misty MacDuffee) SkeenaWild Conservation Trust (Greg Knox) Steelhead Society of BC (TBA) Watershed Watch (Craig Orr, Stan Proboszcz, Ken Wilson, Vicky Husband, Terry Glavin, Aaron Hill) |
| Groundfish (rockfish/lingcod, Integrated Groundfish Management, RCAs) | Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (Sabine Jessen) David Suzuki Foundation (Scott Wallace) *Ecotrust Canada (Danielle Edwards, Brenda Reid-Kuecks) Living Oceans Society (John Driscoll) Watershed Watch (Vicky Husband, Terry Glavin) World Wildlife Fund (Ernie Cooper) |
| Pelagics (Herring, Tuna and Sardines) | David Suzuki Foundation (Scott Wallace) *Ecotrust Canada (Danielle Edwards) Living Oceans Society (John Driscoll) Watershed Watch (Stan Proboszcz) World Wildlife Fund (Ernie Cooper) |
| Marine Mammals | *Rob Williams (Independent) |

MCC Independent Advisors

Individuals from the marine conservation community may be invited by the MCC to participate on MCC Committees and at MCC meetings on the basis of their expertise.

MCC Background

Key to the conservation of marine ecosystems and resources in Pacific Canada is ensuring that the public interest in conservation is afforded the highest policy priority, and that conservation interests are engaged as full and equal stakeholders in fisheries management decisions.

In recent years, government agencies such as Fisheries and Oceans Canada have come to realize that the public interest in conservation must be engaged more directly. The shift is consistent with a worldwide move to involve conservationists in decision-making on fisheries matters.

In April 2003, after considerable and sustained effort by various representatives of the BC marine conservation community, major reforms in fisheries decision-making were announced. These reforms are historic, and for the first time make conservation groups full stakeholders in Fisheries and Oceans' decisions on the West Coast.

In response to these developments, the Pacific Marine Conservation Caucus (MCC) was established in December 2003. The Caucus was formed independently of DFO and acts as the participating environmental organizations' main method of representing conservation interests in formal DFO advisory body consultative processes, particularly but not limited to those related to fisheries management.

Decision Making Protocol:

Issues, papers, recommendations, suggestions for representation in DFO consultations or other meetings, etc. are generally developed by committees and brought to the Steering Committee for approval. Steering committee participants will strive to support the recommendations of the committees. If five or more Steering committee groups support the submission, it is submitted by the MCC with all supportive committee and Steering committee groups listed on the submission. If there are major objections from Steering committee groups, the submission may be made by individual organizations with their names specified in the submission.

Except in extenuating circumstances, committees will allow a reasonable amount of time (one week) for comment and decision from the Steering committee. Notice should also be provided to the Steering committee for upcoming decisions that need to be made.

Everyone will use discretion and notify the Steering Committee of general correspondence that needs to be approved.

Each committee is responsible for developing its own rules and operating procedures. If an individual or organization feels that an issue should go to the MCC Steering Committee, it should first be taken to the appropriate committee for discussion and/or action.

Internal Communications:

The majority of internal MCC communications, outside of meetings, take place on the MCC listserv. Professional courtesy will be used by all groups to help keep one another up to date on relevant issues.

Requests for participation in consultation and/or correspondence from DFO are generally received by the Secretariat and/or Chair. This information will be forwarded to the Steering Committee or appropriate issue-specific committee for review/action.

External Communications:

The MCC website www.mccpacific.org will be a key tool for communicating details of the MCC to the public (mandate, scope, background, MCC submissions, current activities, etc.)

MCC participants will not actively try to represent the MCC in the Media, but will instead deal with issues by representing their individual organizations. Professional courtesy will be used to inform other

MCC organizations when press releases are being issued and when possible, communications will be coordinated. In general, however, the MCC itself will not have a public presence.

Participation in consultation:

The following process will be used to determine MCC participation in consultation processes:

Upon DFO invitation:

- 1) MCC will engage (conditions)
- 2) MCC will not engage
- 3) MCC directs DFO to consult another appropriate group (enabling role).

In absence of DFO invitation:

- 4) MCC recommends that DFO should consult on an issue not currently being covered.

The MCC may also come together on topics not initiated by DFO invitation (May lead to (4) above, as well as issues/topics in (1)).

Criteria for consultation:

The following criteria must be met before the MCC will participate in formal consultations:

- Acceptable terms of reference
- Adequate funding and resources
- Access to data
- Sufficient time for response
- Adequate representation

Administration and Finance:

The Chair and Secretariat are responsible for the administration of the MCC budget, the contribution agreement, and meeting organization.

Financial management of the funding received through the MCC contribution agreement will be carried out by Watershed Watch Salmon Society.

Expense requirements:

Steering Committee members are responsible for keeping track of their expenses and receipts, and submitting them to the Secretariat in a timely manner following MCC related meetings. Reasonable expenses for travel, accommodation and meals are covered under the contribution agreement, whereas salaries are not.