

Issues

- **Wild Salmon Policy (WSP)**

This much promised document has still not been released to the public in draft form, despite many promises of completion long before now. The Integrated Harvest Management Plans are going forward for 2004 without the benefit or clear direction of a WSP. Wild salmon, the icon of British Columbia, in all its amazing abundance, diversity and distribution, is again being put at risk by the failure of DFO to move forward on their many promises to complete a WSP.

- **SARA and COSEWIC**

COSEWIC made two emergency listings last year for Sakinaw and Cultus sockeye, Upper Fraser coho was already listed by COSEWIC. All these runs are at risk of extinction. Will the Minister support the listing of these three critically endangered salmon stocks under SARA?

- **Long Term Sockeye Review Process**

This process is bogged down in the production of an extremely technical and complicated model. It is not clear what the outcomes and objectives will be. It needs to be informed by a WSP. We want development of transparent decision-making processes with clear goals based on best available science and clearly articulated values. Conservation of salmon must come first.

- **Promises: April 2003 promises by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans have not been fulfilled.**

Most of these promises for full stakeholder participation in planning for the conservation of salmon and other marine species have not been fulfilled. There is no North or South Coast Harvest Committee in place in time to comment on the upcoming 2004 fishing season. There is no overriding Policy Committee in place to deal with all marine issues. The planning for the 2004 fishing season appears to be the “business as usual” approach. This is not acceptable

- **Promises: December 2001 promises by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans have not been fulfilled.**

The promises for the rebuilding and conservation of rockfish and lingcod on the BC coast have not been fulfilled. The conditions that would allow the continuation of directed rockfish fisheries do not exist, at present, for any of the fisheries management areas of the coast. These conditions include defensible biomass estimates and verifiable catch data. The targets for large-scale closed areas, a “network” of harvest refugia in Fisheries Management Area 4B – which takes in Johnstone Straits, the Strait of Georgia and adjacent areas – to encompass roughly 50 per cent of known rockfish habitat types in the area, and ii) a similarly designed network of harvest refugia to encompass a minimum of 20 per cent of the known rockfish habitat types elsewhere on the coast, have not been achieved. The present

slate of proposed areas were selected without defensible scientific criteria being in place and do not reach the proposed targets stated above.

We also want to ensure that the closures for lingcod remain in place in the Strait of Georgia, until the stocks have recovered.

- **Access to Data**

We have been denied access to data, despite repeated requests for necessary data. This has been going on for a long period of time, despite promises that the access would be forthcoming. We are now no longer able to participate in processes, such as CGIAC, the Commercial Groundfish Industry Advisory Committee, and the department's efforts to move the groundfish fishery towards more integrated groundfish management as we cannot fully and meaningfully participate without access to data.

This lack of access to data is also affecting researchers at Simon Fraser University, UBC and University of Washington, and others, who would be supportive of DFO and the necessary research work to be done.