

1) Question from Senator Francis on restorative justice agreements

DFO Response:

As mentioned at the May 3, 2022 meeting with the Minister and DFO officials, in 2018, the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of P.E.I. (MCPEI), along with Abegweit First Nation and the Lennox Island First Nation, signed a restorative justice agreement with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the Public Prosecution Service of Canada to add offences under the *Fisheries Act* to the existing MCPEI Indigenous Justice Program. This was the first agreement of its type in Eastern Canada. Since then, in 2019, through collaboration with Conservation and Protection (C&P) of DFO, Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network (MLSN) in Nova Scotia created a position to facilitate DFO Restorative Justice cases. This informal agreement enabled the facilitation of offences under the *Fisheries Act* through Restorative Justice in Nova Scotia.

In addition to these two agreements, there are at least two other groups who are working on similar agreements to enable that same function within their areas.

2) Question from Senator Francis on eligibility for restorative justice programs and how many have completed.

DFO Response:

In terms of the number of individuals who have been eligible for restorative justice programs for fishing-related offences, there have been 1,227 cases diverted (including to Alternative Measures) between 1995 and May 6, 2022. Of those cases, 90 have occurred since 2019 – when Alternative Measures was included in the amended *Fisheries Act*.

As it relates to the question regarding the breakdown by Indigenous versus non-Indigenous, it should be noted that the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) does not require individuals to self-identify as Indigenous or by any other identity factor and therefore is unable to provide a breakdown.

Finally, the Department's tracking system does not currently track the successful completion of these cases in a way that can be searched.

- 3) Provide a link to the “What we Heard” report from the Blue Economy Strategy in response to a question from Senator Ringuette.

DFO Response:

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/blue-economy-economie-bleue/engagement-paper-document-mobilisation/heard-entendu-eng.html>

4) Question from Senator Manning on salmon farming threats to wild salmon

DFO Response:

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) acknowledges that aquaculture activities, including salmon farming, can present environmental stressors and have some effects on the environment. The [Pathways of Effects for Finfish and Shellfish Aquaculture](#) report identified seven categories of stressors. As DFO's mandate seeks to improve the management of fisheries and aquaculture in Canada, the Department works to understand the impacts of those stressors and their mitigation through regulatory oversight. Over the years, DFO has been conducting research to: (1) assess the deposition of organic matter from aquaculture operations to characterise and model the distribution and effects on sediment and seabed biodiversity; (2) examine the occurrence of aquaculture drugs and pesticides in the marine environment to assess their fate and persistence; (3) identify escaped farmed salmon and determine potential ecological or genetic impacts to wild fish populations; and, (4) understand the occurrence and treatment of several pathogens and pests reported on and around salmon farms and their interactions with wild fish population on the both the west and east coasts of Canada.

DFO supports science-based decision-making with regards to aquaculture activities. A number of assessments are currently underway to evaluate the impacts of specific stressors on wild fish population, including genetic interactions between farmed and wild Atlantic salmon on the east coast of Canada and sea lice from farmed Atlantic salmon on the west coast of Canada.

Collectively, this historic and ongoing research provides an understanding of aquaculture stressors and threats to wild salmon are reduced when mitigation is in place and when farms are sited appropriately.

5) Question from Senator McPhedran on the Cape Town Agreement

Transport Canada Response:

Transport Canada is currently engaged in a project to renew safety regulations for all fishing vessels. Transport Canada is working to complete this project as early as possible. The current priority is to complete the phase applicable to fishing vessels of not more than 24 metres in length which represents the majority of the Canadian fleet. Once the work is completed for vessels of not more than 24 metres, the regulations for vessels of more than 24 metres will be developed which is currently targeted for pre-publication in the *Canada Gazette*, Part I, mid 2023, with publication in 2024. These renewed regulations will be the foundation that will allow Canada to ratify the Cape Town Agreement. Once this work is completed, the decision on the ratification of the Cape Town Agreement will be the purview of the Parliament of Canada and the Cabinet.

For information, there are 18,000 fishing vessels of not more than 24 metres in Canada and approximately 140 of more than 24 metres. Of these 140, less than 20 are fishing in the high seas and are included in the scope of the Cape Town Agreement.