



2024 Fraser Forum #1

Jan 30 – Feb 1, 2024

What We Heard

Presentation to Forum
Greg Witzky (FSMC) & Robin Hawes (DFO)
Feb 1, 2024



Item: Forum Process

Overview

- More clarity on what goes into the ‘back eddy,’ process for revisiting those
- Need deadlines for items/ missing next steps/actions
- More time needed for some agenda topics (e.g. 2023 WWH, Chinook, SEP)
- Interest in more engagement, e.g. 4th Forum, Visions Conference
- Need to determine next steps for Forum Renewal to address some of these questions, ToRs

Next Steps / Actions

- Forum Planning Committee (FPC) to discuss back eddy process and look to incorporate into interim draft Terms of Reference
- FPC and JTWG to share interim draft Terms of Reference for Forum Planning Committee, Fraser Forums, and JTWG before the next Forum
- Deadlines for tasks to be set when possible
- FPC will take what was learned here in shaping future Forum agendas

Tech Questions

- None identified

Deadlines

- Mid-Feb to send draft ToR

Item: Communications

Overview

- Language we use is important
- Do not make assumptions around interest in fisheries (i.e. Pink Salmon).
- Use of term “Excess Salmon to Spawning (ESSR)” to describe small FSC fisheries, would like to see language that captures the reality of the fishery.
- Seeking updates on UNDRIP progress

Next Steps / Actions

- Comments on language are appreciated and attempts to improve will continue.
- ESSR discussion is ongoing. A few ideas for what these fisheries should be called have been provided. Work needed on what these fisheries are called.

Tech Questions

- None identified

Deadlines

- Ongoing

Item: Fraser Sockeye

Overview

- Several suggestions for improving language and context for post season reporting
- Seeking information on decision rules to guide terminal fisheries
- Questions around identifying escapement options for draft IFMP
- Broad concerns that FM framework was designed for era of high abundance, constraining potential FSC opportunities.

Next Steps / Actions

- follow-up with TNG biologist (Nicklin) on rationale for proposed targets/removal references to guide terminal fisheries.
- Seeking escapement options for IFMP prior to next Forum
- DFO to provide explanation of ESSR fisheries and why those fish cannot be caught in coastal areas, but can be in terminal areas.
- Provide 2018 paper that discusses Smsy

Tech Questions

Deadlines

- Next Forum – sockeye options

Item: Fraser Pink

Overview

- Fishing season was confusing.
- Couldn't fish Pink due to co-migrating species of concern;
- Confusion regarding opening.
- Pink salmon are vital to the ecosystem
- Concern that terms of DFO's economic fishery agreements are a barrier to participation.

Next Steps / Actions

- DFO to review process for initiating pink fisheries

Tech Questions

Deadlines

- Prior to next Fraser pink season

Item: Chinook

Overview

- Changes to fisheries management measures should not be considered based on one year's data.
- We heard that there is feeling priority access is not being implemented.
- Concerns about Spring and early returning Summer return in 2024, given Big Bar impacts in 2019.
- Disagreement with catch and release fisheries.
- Chinook MSF Fishery review – any changes required based on 2023 reference fishery data? Request for 2022 MSF data.

Next Steps / Actions

- Run reconstruction (RR) and final infilled escapements in mid-March.
- No new MSFs yet but expect to receive requests through the IFMP process.
- DFO to engage First Nations in upcoming FSAR process for Fraser Chinook
- DFO to provide 2022 MSF stock composition data in February

Tech Questions

- Request to have a detailed technical conversation at JTWG regarding RR.

Deadlines

- Feb-March

Item: Coho

Overview

- Interest in terminal fishery harvest plans to provide for FSC access on hatchery stocks.
- Seeking 2022 genetic stock identification (GSI) data
- Request for more information on recent results in the September pilot fishery (parental based tagging and DNA) in the Strait of Georgia Coho Assessment fishery

Next Steps / Actions

- DFO Resource Managers discuss FSC harvest opportunities with Nations on hatchery marked coho for next season
- Follow up with SC staff on 2022 GSI SoG assessment fishery data (PBT also?)

Tech Questions

Deadlines

- Will update Action Tracker is deadline

Item: Chum

Overview

- In 2023, due to low Chum returns, there was no commercial Johnstone Strait fishery. In-river FSC fisheries were constrained by Steelhead window closure and run size.
- Concern with Johnstone Strait (JS) recreational chum directed fishery being open until closed, and starting season with full limits in years when run is poor.
- Harvest decision rules for recreational fisheries in Johnstone Strait when return is estimated to be <1M

Next Steps / Actions

- Provide catch in SC recreational marine fishery (near final estimate is 269 for ALL SC marine waters).

Tech Questions

Deadlines

Item: Steelhead

Overview

- Consider having province come to future Forum
- Seeking clarity around who manages Steelhead (Steelhead managed by Province in non-tidal waters, and managed by DFO in tidal waters)

Next Steps / Actions

- FPC to discuss Province attending future Forum (note Jenn Davis from province attended the Victoria Forum in 2023)

Tech Questions

Deadlines

Item: Salmon Enhancement

Overview

- Significant interest shown in hatchery production planning and mass marking.
- Concerns raised about proposed large-scale new mass marking proposals.
- Interest in further discussion on hatchery production, how it can be used as a tool to contribute to stock rebuilding and in studies being done to inform hatchery production (i.e. for SR Killer Whales).

Next Steps / Actions

- Is there interest from participants in receiving a summary of all proposed changes on or before the next Forum?
- Forum participants to provide thoughts on how, what, when SEP could provide information and commence discussion on issues noted above.
- DFO to provide information on mass marking Working Group
- Question of where to discuss SEP issues: Forum, FSMB, Visions or at AAROM/local, and/or FNFC

Tech Questions

Deadlines

- TBD by next steps above



Questions?
Comments?
