

Photo: Elko Jones • Coho Salmon Par (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*)



Fisheries and Oceans Canada | Pacific Region **2018-2022 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The Goal of Canada's Wild Salmon Policy (WSP)

"To restore and maintain healthy and diverse salmon populations and their habitats for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Canada in perpetuity" (WSP, 2005, p.8)

Context | Iconic Pacific Salmon

Wild Pacific salmon are an iconic part of the life and culture of west coast Canada. They hold tremendous value for natural ecosystems, cultural and spiritual practices, jobs and income, and recreational enjoyment along the coast and inland watersheds of the Pacific Region. Wild salmon support First Nations, commercial and recreational fisheries that are a foundational part of communities in the Pacific region.

Pacific Salmon have complex life histories which span thousands of kilometers of fresh and marine water along the Pacific coast—from Alaska to California.

They complete their life cycle by returning to their natal stream to spawn, and this homing to their natal stream is an important biological characteristic of salmon stocks, with each stock genetically adapted to its home environment. In the Pacific Region, over 460 Conservation Units (CUs) of salmon have been identified based on ecological, genetic and life history characteristics, and each of

these will endure different and wide-ranging natural and human-made environmental pressures over the course of their migration. Salmon management is complex, in part due to these varying life-histories, and declines in some stocks add additional layers of management complexity.

Purpose | DFO's Actions over Next 5 years

The *Wild Salmon Policy 2018-2022 Implementation Plan* (the Plan) is a coordinated action plan that builds on 13 years of work guided by the Wild Salmon Policy to protect and restore these incredible populations. With a focus on developing common guidance and standardized methods, this Plan describes how the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) will use its scientific and management expertise to meet its responsibilities for the conservation of wild Pacific salmon over the next five years. The Department will leverage its relationships, coast-wide geographic jurisdiction and clear mandate to use focused science advice to deliver good salmon management and transparent accountability.



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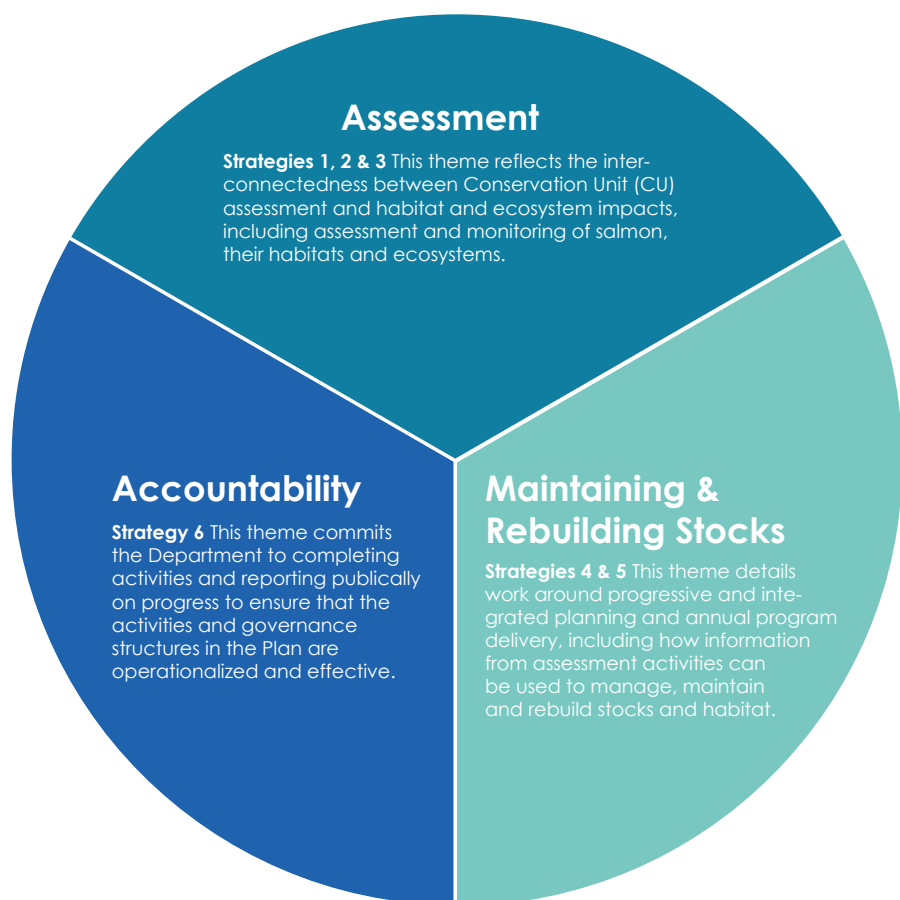
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Working With Others | Key to Success

Recognizing that implementing the biological, environmental, economic and social objectives of *Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon* (WSP) cannot be accomplished alone, DFO has reached out to communities across BC and Yukon throughout the development of the Plan. DFO heard from hundreds of engaged citizens who, like DFO, envision a future in which healthy and diverse wild salmon populations and their habitats are restored and maintained. Continued cross-jurisdictional and collaborative federal, provincial/territorial, local and Indigenous partnerships are

essential ingredients to an integrated approach to salmon management. **The success of salmon populations in the future depends not only on work being undertaken by DFO, but also on important work being undertaken by First Nations, federal and provincial government agencies, fishing and stewardship organizations, ENGOs and communities across the region who share a commitment to conserve wild Pacific salmon, their habitats and ecosystems. DFO is committed to working on an integrated approach to wild salmon with the Province of BC.**

Wild salmon work in Yukon meets the goal and objectives of the wild salmon policy, but through a very different co-management model which involves First Nations Governments, the Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee and the Government of Canada. This unique process facilitates the development of co-management strategies that effectively incorporate a balance of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and scientific information, and facilitates local and regional participation from a broad range of stakeholders.



Themes | Understanding the Strategy

The *Wild Salmon Policy 2018-2022 Implementation Plan* is guided by three overarching and interrelated themes (*Assessment, Maintaining and Rebuilding Stocks and Accountability*), encompassing six integrated WSP strategies, and 48 targeted activities. The Plan outlines key Departmental salmon-related activities, their timelines and accountabilities. As part of the Plan, DFO is committing to publically reporting on these activities through annual reporting and a review at the end of the five-year period.

Assessment | WSP Strategies 1, 2 & 3

The *Assessment* theme includes the ongoing assessing and monitoring of the biological status of salmon, their habitats, and ecosystems. Assessment work is the foundation of successful management and is a critical first-step in integrated planning, and this theme reflects the interconnectedness between CU assessment and habitat and ecosystem impacts. By its nature, assessment work takes stock of what has happened and typifies the broader Government of Canada's commitment to strengthening the role of science in government decision-making.

Strategy 1 | Standardized Monitoring of Wild Salmon Status

Priorities to 2022

- Implement prioritization method for assessing and monitoring CUs or groups of CUs
- Modify or develop metrics and document new status assessment methods
- Consolidate and improve documentation of standards for internal and external monitoring programs and improve data sharing through open data portal

Strategies 2 & 3 | Assessment of Habitat Status and Inclusion of Ecosystem Values & Monitoring

Priorities to 2022

- Identify a set of core environmental indicators associated with ecosystems
- Complete documentation on the Risk Assessment Method for Salmon (RAMS)
- Deliver the State of the Salmon Program to track and understand salmon trends
- Work with the Pacific Salmon Foundation on the *Pacific Salmon Explorer*

Maintaining and Rebuilding Stocks | WSP Strategies 4 & 5

The *Maintaining and Rebuilding Stocks* theme focuses on how information from assessment activities is used to manage, maintain and rebuild stocks and habitat. This theme details work around progressive and integrated planning and annual program delivery. Planning activities are forward looking, and are adaptable to evolving conservation requirements.

Strategy 4 | Integrated Strategic Planning

Priorities to 2022

- Develop an initial set of long-term strategic plans (rebuilding) for prioritized Red CUs/MUs
- Complete recovery potential assessments for the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed salmon species/stocks and begin SARA Recovery Strategies, Action Plans and Management Plans for SARA listed species
- Investigate new research tools to diagnose and study disease and other conditions affecting wild salmon
- Continue to inform, develop, and implement sustainable aquaculture measures to mitigate impacts to wild salmon

Strategy 5 | Annual Program Delivery

Priorities to 2022

- Continue to assess the status of salmon populations
- Continue to plan and conduct annual fisheries through Integrated Fisheries Management Plans
- Continue to encourage and support partners (First Nations, community partners and other stakeholders) in habitat management activities through DFO programming and the Province of BC and Yukon Territory
- Continue to plan and implement annual salmon enhancement

Accountability | WSP Strategy 6

The *Accountability* theme ensures that the activities and governance structures in this Plan are operationalized and effective. While Activities Tables at the end of each strategy section detail specific activities and target dates, the Accountability theme commits the Department to completing activities and reporting publicly on progress. Through this reflection, the Department will be accountable for not only monitoring progress, but for adjusting activities to better satisfy the WSP goal through time.

Strategy 6 | Annual Program Delivery

Priorities to 2022

- Public reporting on the WSP Implementation Plan
- Update the WSP Implementation Plan, as necessary, based on renewed *Fisheries Act*

Moving Forward | Protecting Salmon

Salmon management is complex and interconnected. Successful integration of strategies, activities, and new approaches is necessary to ensure the overall success of salmon management. **By continuing to make fisheries management decisions grounded in the precautionary approach and in science, the Department will be well-placed to support the sustainability of wild Pacific salmon to 2022 and beyond.**

Commitment | Updating Actions

While the Plan outlines work the Department is committed to undertaking over the next five years, the context around salmon management is changing. New language has been introduced in Parliament for the *Fisheries Act* which would modernize safeguards to reflect the evolving nature of fish and habitat management. If adopted, the proposed amendments would precipitate regulatory, policy, and program changes which could impact salmon and salmon habitat management.

DFO is committed to transparency, and in 2020 will seek to include additional activities in this Implementation Plan stemming from any related changes to the *Fisheries Act*.

Further Tools and Information | Select References

Wild Salmon Policy 2018-2022 Implementation Plan – <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/species-especes/salmon-saumon/wsp-pss/ip-pmo/index-eng.html>

2005 Pacific Wild Salmon Policy – <http://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/315577.pdf>

DFO Website – <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index-eng.htm>

Pacific Salmon Explorer – www.salmonexplorer.ca

DFO Aquaculture:

- Science and Research – <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/science-eng.html>
- Aquaculture in BC – <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/bc-aquaculture-cb-eng.html>

Fisheries Act Updates – <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/campaign-campagne/fisheries-act-loi-sur-les-peches/proposed-propose-eng.html>