

**A Vision for  
Recreational Fisheries  
in British Columbia  
2008-2012**

**Draft Document  
for Discussion only**

**DRAFT - 10 October, 2007**

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## Dedication

Some words of dedication to John Brockley...

This document is dedicated to one of working group members, Mr. John Brockley, who had vision for recreational fisheries in British Columbia. In 2007, John was awarded Canada's National Recreational Fisheries Award which is a testament to his commitment and hard work on behalf of the recreational fishery in BC. The wording on his selection summarizes it best "Mr. John Brockley is well recognized for his knowledge, tenacity and dedication to the advancement of the recreational fishery in British Columbia." The "John Brockley test" for the success of our Vision will be in the actions we take.

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## A. Introduction

This scope of this document includes the recreational fisheries in the marine waters off British Columbia as well as freshwater angling for chum, sockeye, pink, chinook and coho salmon. The fishery extends many miles offshore to the near shore areas, with salmon as the main species of interest but also including halibut, lingcod, rockfish, crab, and prawns with other species taken in smaller quantities. This plan encompasses approximately 350,000 Tidal Water license holders as well as that portion of the 300,000 non-tidal license holders who fish for salmon. These anglers originate from British Columbia, other parts of Canada, and Visitors from other parts of the world who participate in recreational fisheries in British Columbia each year. Recent surveys of Canadians indicate that recreational fishing is the most popular outdoor activity in British Columbia.

Despite the size and importance of the recreational fishery, this fishery like others on the Pacific coast, is undergoing change. The change is based on a need to ensure resources are managed sustainably; that fisheries are resilient and adapt to the increased uncertainty and variability in fishing opportunities that have resulted from a combination of environmental, demographic, social and economic factors; and that the social and economic benefits are broadly realized.

To assist with the required change, the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) introduced a new direction for fisheries management, Pacific Fisheries Reform, aimed at improving biological sustainability and fishery benefits. The most recent announcement by DFO of the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) further advances these concepts. The new policy direction was in response to reports from the Task Group on Post-treaty Fisheries and the First Nations Panel on Fisheries. Pacific Fisheries Reform provides a vision and set of principles with themes of strengthening conservation efforts, improved monitoring, increasing First Nations involvement in harvesting and management, and improving the certainty and stability of all fisheries. The most recent announcement by DFO of the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fishery Initiative further advances these concepts.

In keeping with this direction, and in response to concerns by recreational fishing interests that Pacific Fisheries Reform was largely a plan for First Nations and the commercial sector, the Sport Fishing Advisory Board (SFAB) engaged DFO and the B.C. Ministry of Environment (MoE), to begin drafting a plan to ensure progress toward a collective vision for the recreational fishery. This document is the result. It is meant to serve as a framework for developing goals, initiatives and actions to support achievement of a collective vision for the recreational fishery in B.C.

For members of the SFAB and the broader recreational fishing community, it is intended to provide an indication of future goals for management of the recreational fishery and the activities required to achieve those goals. For resource managers, it offers more explicit guidance on considering recreational objectives when developing integrated fishery management plans. For the broader integrated planning forums, as well as the public at large, this plan will improve understanding of the interests and aspirations of the recreational fishing community.

## **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

While the authority to manage the Pacific fisheries lies with the federal government, there is a clear need for collaboration in managing this complex fishery. The Province of B.C. and the recreational fishing community, through the SFAB, will work together to attain the goals set out in this document. The roles of each party are described below<sup>1</sup>.

### ***Government of Canada***

The federal government, through DFO, has the lead role in managing all fisheries in tidal waters, as well as salmon fisheries in fresh water. Other federal departments, such as Transport Canada (boater and vessel safety) and Environment Canada (water quality, pollution control) also play an important role in the Pacific coast fishery.

The mandate of DFO includes ensuring conservation of the resource, healthy and productive ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, and safety on the water. These goals are achieved through activities such as maintaining a policy and legislative framework, licensing, stock assessment, enforcement and monitoring, habitat protection, and maintenance of navigational aids.

The federal government maintains a diverse legislative and policy framework for managing the recreational fishery. This framework includes obligations to First Nations, legislation such as the Fisheries Act, Oceans Act and policies such as: Wild Salmon Policy, allocation policies and the Operational Policy Framework for Recreational Fisheries in Canada.

### ***Province of British Columbia***

By encouraging and supporting the sustainable development of our recreational fisheries, the province plays a key role in its management for the benefit of all British Columbians. Support for further development within the recreational fishery will include the development of infrastructure and other operational requirements of the recreational fishery. The provincial government plays the lead role in the management and protection of foreshore, riparian and lake habitats that are important to our marine and freshwater fisheries resources. Through the BC Ministry of Environment (MoE), the provincial government plays an important supporting role in the sustainable management of our ocean resources and marine fisheries in a manner that protects the health of the environment, supports a thriving economy and provides for healthy communities.

### ***Sport Fishing Advisory Board***

The SFAB has been the official advisory body to DFO since it was constituted in 1964. The SFAB provides an inclusive and broadly representative process for the views of the recreational fishing community. There are approximately two-dozen local sport fishing advisory committees throughout

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<sup>1</sup> For useful web links to the governments and the SFAB see page [173-174](#): Useful Links.

the province with representatives from local recreational fishing interests. These local committees nominate a representative to the North and South coast regional committees of the SFAB. The regional committees also have representatives from provincial angling advocacy groups and representatives to the Pacific Salmon Commission.

The SFAB provides an advisory role to DFO on many aspects of the recreational fishery related to fishing plans which includes: stock assessment and monitoring, regulations and enforcement, policy development and advice on enhancing the recreational fishing experience.

## C. Historical Perspective

The opportunity to fish for recreation and food has long been an important part of life on the Pacific coast of Canada. In fact, angling for salmon, especially chinook and coho, is an icon of west coast lifestyle. Fishing for personal use of other aquatic species like halibut, lingcod, crab and prawns has also been important to those who wish to derive recreation and food from the waters around them.

Recreational fishing has given Canadians a unique opportunity to connect with their natural environment. It has given them both an appreciation of the importance of maintaining a healthy ecosystem capable of supporting an abundance of marine life and a sense of the need to work responsibly with others to protect that ecosystem.

One of British Columbia's first recorded "fish stories" recounts the excitement felt by the captain of a British frigate after he caught his first Pacific salmon in the waters off Victoria in 1845. This early "tourist" enjoyed his fish at dinner as did many of the province's new residents from Europe, for whom "recreational" fishing was a way to supplement the local food supply. Indeed, while these newcomers to British Columbia did not have had the same ceremonial connection with salmon as the province's aboriginal people, their reliance on the natural bounty of the sea and land was very significant and has remained so to this day.

For a century, recreational access to fish in tidal waters was virtually unrestricted with the catch considered minor by fisheries managers relative to the commercial fishery. Introduced in 1951, the first daily bag limit of ten salmon and minimum size limit of 8 inches was followed by additional rules as the province's population increased, became more affluent and as a result, turned its attention to more diverse recreational fishing opportunities. Growth in the number of anglers led to competition between the recreational and commercial harvest sectors for access to fish.

At first, most recreational fishing took place close to home in areas near Vancouver and southern Vancouver Island. By 1980 effort in the Strait of Georgia exceeded half a million boat trips a year and a million salmon were harvested annually. No count was kept of the catch of other marine species. For both regulatory and fiscal reasons a tidal waters recreational fishing license was introduced in 1981.

In 1982 a Commission of Inquiry on Pacific Fisheries conducted by Dr. Peter Pearse told the federal government that it should begin "maximizing the economic and social benefits from our fisheries resources" by "allocating the available catch between the sport fishery and other fisheries in proportions that will generate the greatest value".

The Pearse recommendation was the beginning of a series of government efforts to try and define a vision for the recreational fishery. Following additional work by former Fisheries Deputy Minister Art May and former judge Sam Toy, DFO adopted a salmon allocation policy in 1998 that after conservation and First Nations food, social, and ceremonial needs were addressed, provides the recreational sector “priority access” to chinook and coho during periods of low abundance. As well, the policy promises “predictable and stable fishing opportunities” for sockeye, pink and chum. Subsequently, the salmon fishery, particularly for chinook and coho, began to be more actively managed as a result of a more precautionary approach to meeting a series of conservation challenges.

Since the mid-1990’s, changes in the ecosystem resulted in greatly reduced numbers of chinook and coho residing in the Strait of Georgia which in turn, led to a dramatic decline in the recreational salmon harvest and effort. While much fishing activity was transferred elsewhere, especially to the West Coast of Vancouver Island and the Northern coastlines, abundance began to be affected by climate events such as El Nino which brought new predators of juvenile salmon to our shores. License sales dropped sharply in 1996 when license fees were increased and strict measures were implemented in all fisheries harvesting chinook salmon that originated from rivers on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

As climate change and other factors continued to affect the aquatic ecosystem governments reacted with new approaches to address these concerns. In 1999, fishery management provisions of the 1985 Pacific Salmon Treaty with the United States, were renegotiated with a greater emphasis on chinook and coho conservation measures in all fisheries. Rather than just limiting the interception of salmon bound for the other country, these new obligations required fisheries management plans in both countries to be more responsive to the health of salmon stocks on both sides of the border. More rigorous conservation regimes like the Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon the Species at Risk Act, and marine protected areas were introduced. Most recently, a program for reforming Pacific fisheries was initiated in order to ensure biological sustainability and improved certainty and stability within fisheries. With all these changes, the challenge to secure diverse, high quality recreational fishing opportunities has grown. While salmon continues to have the highest profile within the tidal water sport fishery, the diversity of the recreational fishery experience must also be recognized and fostered. Conservation challenges for species such as lingcod and rockfish, and competition between users for harvests of halibut, crab and prawn is intensifying, especially near major population centers.

This combination of environmental and allocation challenges for all fishery interests has coincided with increased pressure from First Nations to settle outstanding issues with respect to their access to the fisheries resource. First Nations access is being pursued through government programs, the BC Treaty process and the courts.

Clearly, the recreational fishery is important to both the west coast life style and the economy of British Columbia. Today, fishery managers work more closely than ever with recreational fishery advisors to develop sustainable fishing opportunities.

## **D. The Framework**

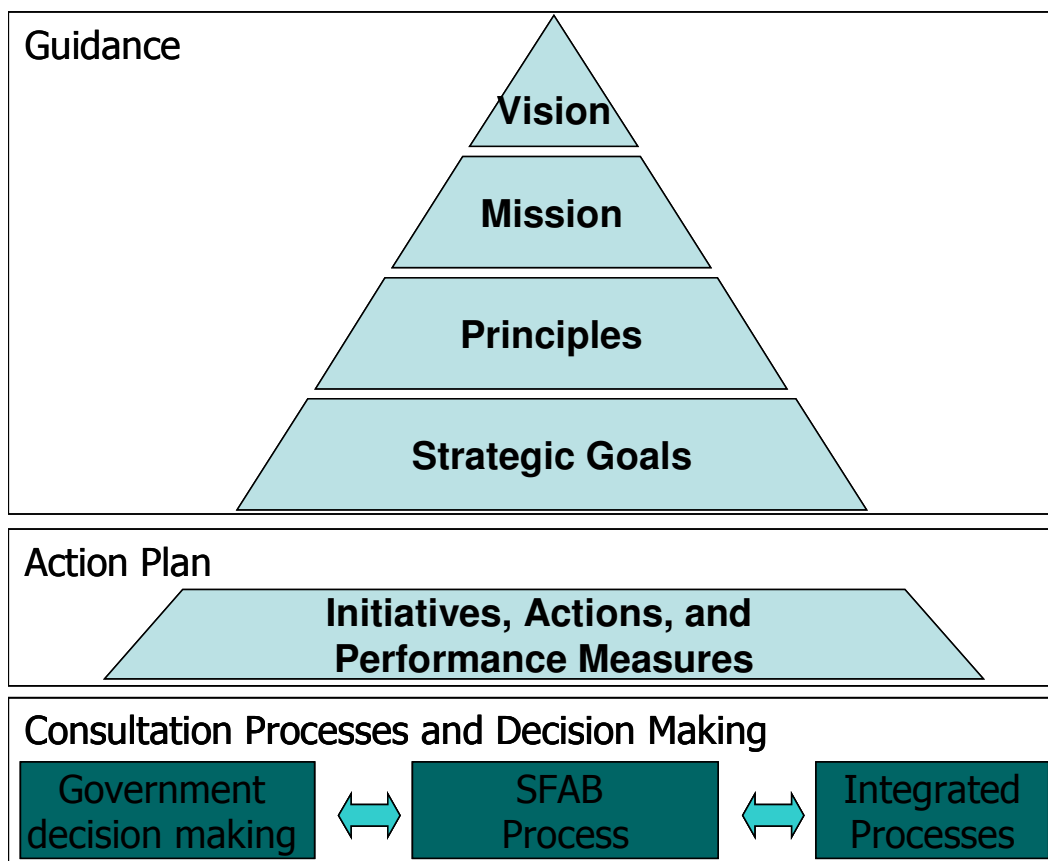
The governments and SFAB will build the following framework to move forward toward the collective vision. It consists of three main components, including 1) general guidance; 2) an action

plan with initiatives, specific actions, and performance measures; and 3) a foundation based on an effective process for collaboration, consultation, and decision making.

The framework components in this document include a vision and mission statement, nine principles describing common values of the recreational fishing community and government, and seven strategic goals which together reflect the common vision to be achieved. The framework operates within the existing legislative and policy framework, as well as the strategic context such as government priorities, fishery resource status, and dynamics of the recreational fishery and community. The primary objective is to provide broad guidance to fishery managers, decision makers, and the recreational community. Another objective of this document is to improve the understanding of the recreational fishery by other stakeholders and first nations, especially those engaged in the broader integrated harvest planning committees.

In the coming year, the federal and provincial governments will work with the SFAB to develop an action and implementation plan as well as a process for addressing new issues as they arise and a protocol for decision making.

Figure 1. Framework for moving toward a common vision.



## E. Vision and Mission

***The Vision: A sustainable and vibrant recreational fishery in British Columbia, providing broad social and economic benefits through diverse opportunities that recognize and respect other users of the resource.***

***The Mission: To achieve this vision through the best managed recreational fisheries in the world, consisting of:***

- ***A healthy environment and fishery resource;***
- ***Sound management and decision making;***
- ***Sustainable, stable, and diverse recreational fishing opportunities.***

There are few outdoor activities that involve as many British Columbians as do recreational fisheries and few that have the potential to connect people with the aquatic environment in such a direct and meaningful way as does fishing. Spending a day on the water with children, family and friends can be the beginning of memories that last a lifetime. It can be the foundation for strengthening the connection between humans and the environment.

As the environment and society change it is important to take steps to protect this heritage and to ensure that respect for our environment and recreational fisheries continues to be an important focus for ordinary British Columbians, visitors and the federal and provincial governments. The creation of a common vision between governments and the recreational fishing community is a necessary foundation for protecting and maintaining both recreational fisheries and the complex marine aquatic environments on which they depend.

Through the process of creating this vision, representatives of the recreational fishing community and government have committed to work together to achieve a sustainable and vibrant recreational fishery. The parties have worked collaboratively toward developing meaningful goals and strategies for success. Despite the many challenges facing our natural resources, British Columbian's are fortunate to have a resource that has the potential to thrive and prosper.

## F. Principles

Decision making, setting priorities and operational activities around the recreational fishery are guided by a broad policy and legislative framework. Some of the policies relevant to recreational fisheries include: the 2005 Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon, the 1998 Pacific Salmon Allocation Policy and the 2001 National Operational Framework for Recreational Fisheries in Canada. Legal requirements, such as those laid out in the constitution, by legislation, and in the courts set a course for decision making. In addition, priority setting and decision making are guided by government priorities and objectives set out in numerous documents and strategic plans.

The framework in this document integrates this array of guidance within a single source. As such it should create a common understanding and a common basis for the management and development of the recreational fishery.

The following principles represent a collaborative attempt to consolidate and synthesize the existing guidance from a multitude of sources and where necessary interpret more general directions in the context of managing the recreational fishery. The following principles also define the underlying values that should guide decision making, priority setting, and operational activities affecting the recreational fishery. They provide a context against which we can go about achieving the vision and fulfilling the mission.

**1. Conservation of naturally reproducing fish and their habitat is the highest priority.**

Abundant wild fish stocks in their natural environment provide the best opportunity to achieve sustainable fisheries and are the best indicators of healthy ecosystems. Fisheries management practices, based on sound scientific and local knowledge and supporting policies, should be aimed at adhering to this principle.

**2. Conservation, stewardship and wise use of the fisheries resource is a shared responsibility.**

Management activities required to achieve healthy fish stocks and sustainable fisheries are multi-faceted and challenging. These activities include priority setting, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Many of these activities are a shared responsibility of government, First Nations, the recreational community, or the broader group of stakeholders. Providing resource users an opportunity to play a greater role in the decision making process and take greater responsibility for resource management, will increase their commitment to conservation.

**3. Fish are a common property resource and fisheries are managed for the benefit of all Canadians.**

Fisheries resources belong to the people of Canada and they are managed by the Federal and Provincial governments for the benefit of First Nations, recreational and commercial harvesters, other stakeholders with an interest in the sustainability of ecosystems and the general public.

**4. After conservation, First Nations fishing for food, social and ceremonial purposes has priority.**

The management of recreational fisheries will be consistent with Canada's constitutional and fiduciary responsibilities to First Nations peoples as well as the terms of negotiated Treaty settlements.

**5. Recreational fishing is a socially and economically valuable use of fishery resources and is the means by which many Canadians access and experience these resources.**

Recreational fishing gives Canadians access to their rich natural environment. Over 350,000 anglers participate in the diverse opportunities afforded by fishing opportunities on all marine species, plus anadromous salmon species in BC. From a business perspective,

\$750 million in annual direct expenditures can be traced to marine recreational fishing, plus the spin-offs to other related activities. The recreational fishing community is an important and legitimate user of the resource and an important partner in management and stewardship.

**6. The unique needs of the recreational fishery, such as stable and predictable fishing opportunities, will be explicitly considered and clearly reflected in integrated fishery management plans.**

Integrated fishery management planning requires the careful consideration of conservation requirements and the interests of all harvest groups. After considering First Nations food, social and ceremonial requirements, the harvest interests of the recreational and commercial fishing sectors must be considered together. This means that as fishing plans for one sector are being developed or as in-season decisions are being made, the interests of the other sector need to be explicitly considered. This consideration must happen before decisions are taken.

**7. Prior to making decisions on recreational fishery management issues, governments will seek advice through appropriate inclusive, transparent and accountable consultation processes.**

The need for government to ensure conservation and other legislated requirements is evident. At the same time, however, there needs to be an understanding of the importance of involving, where practical, those affected by decisions in the decision-making process. Often those affected have local knowledge valuable to good decision making. In addition, such involvement adds legitimacy and credibility to decisions and ultimately, the willingness of those affected to accept and comply with those decisions. This should be done through a democratic body that is widely known and supported, and is accountable back to the stakeholders it represents. For the marine and anadromous salmon species recreational fishery, the Sport Fishing Advisory Board has these characteristics and has successfully served its constituent anglers since 1964.

**8. Stock enhancement and habitat restoration may be used to rebuild fish stocks and create fishing opportunities.**

Where the abundance of fisheries resources has been adversely affected by habitat degradation, over-harvesting or other factors, those resources may be rehabilitated or augmented by artificial means. In many areas habitat improvements or restoration may be necessary to rebuild fish stocks. Further, in some situations where wild stocks are not adversely affected, new fishing opportunities may be created with judicious stock enhancement.

**9. The recreational fishery will be managed to foster its current and future potential.**

Fostering the recreational fishery means to create conditions which will allow the potential social and economic benefits to be realized. A concerted management effort will be required to secure these benefits and meet the demand for quality recreational fishing experiences.

## G. Key Themes

During the development of this plan, issues in the management of the fishery resources, and especially the recreational fishery, were brought forward, discussed openly, and summarized into the following key themes.

**Conservation:** Increased variability in environmental conditions facing fish stocks, especially salmon, has led to increased uncertainty about return numbers and difficulty in predicting fishing opportunities well in advance. This has undermined expectation and opportunity in the recreational fishery. The SFAB has identified the need to improve the status of species and stocks of significance to the recreational fishery such as: southern BC coho, lower Georgia Strait chinook, WCVI chinook, and inshore rockfish and lingcod. An important step in addressing the status of these stocks will be to ensure enough information is available to enable DFO to shape fisheries on more abundant stocks, while avoiding stocks of concerns such as those noted above.

**Value of the Fishery:** The recreational fishery represents 39% of the total dollar output of all fishery and aquaculture activity in British Columbia. The potential to stabilize and eventually increase the social and economic benefits of recreational fishing will be strengthened by improved understanding of this value by both governments and resource stakeholders. Significant communication, outreach and education activities are important, both to increase angler participation and to improve understanding of the potential of the fishery.

**Consultation and Engagement:** Improving consultation processes and developing better relationships between the recreational angling community and fishery managers will help to build trust, facilitate open and timely communication and ensure that the opportunity to fish with the expectation of catch is available to the greatest extent possible. As an example, a protocol could be developed which outlines how managers should consider the needs of the recreational fishery when developing commercial fishing plans.

**Sound Management and Decision Making:** The foundation of sound management is accurate and adequate information. The importance of this information has increased with the growing need to address conservation concerns by limiting or shaping fisheries. The future ability of managers to provide stable and predictable fishing opportunities to the recreational fishery will be limited by the quality of information they have available to them in a timely manner. The fact that the recreational fishery does not have the ability to adjust in the same weekly or daily time scales as commercial fisheries is an overriding concern that needs to be thoroughly incorporated in management and planning. This may take the form of in-season decision rules. Reform of the management of the Strait of Georgia lingcod and coast wide crab fisheries has been identified as a priority along with the need to improve the status of catch, effort and biological information in all fisheries.

**Sharing Responsibility – Community Stewardship:** There is limited government financial and physical capability to meet all the needs of managing the fishery resource. Recognizing this limitation, the recreational fishing community is prepared to take on a greater

responsibility to meet standards for catch and effort monitoring, stewardship, and more. In order to effectively accomplish this, the roles and responsibilities of different partners in the management of the fishery need to be clearly identified, along with mechanisms for funding the increased role of the recreational fishing community.

**Communication:** Due to the large and diverse needs of the recreational fishing community, there is a need to ensure strong communication processes within the recreational community, with all levels of governments (including First Nations), commercial fishing interests, and the general public. The significant social and economic benefits of the recreational fishery is largely unknown by an increasingly urban population. Educating the public of these benefits and demonstrating best practices will improve the perception of the fishery by the average British Columbian and hopefully increase participation.

## H. Strategic Goals

Having identified the above themes and examined the underlying issues against the new statements of vision, mission, and principles, the following seven strategic goals were developed collaboratively by the SFAB, DFO, and MoE.

In the coming months, the governments and the SFAB will develop an Action Plan, including key initiatives, suggested actions, and initial performance measures.

### **Strategic Goal #1: Achieve healthy and productive marine and freshwater ecosystems that support recreational fisheries**

Conservation has been defined in the Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon “ (WSP) as the protection, maintenance, and rehabilitation of genetic diversity, species, and ecosystems to sustain biodiversity and the continuance of evolutionary and natural production processes. This definition identifies the primacy of conservation over use, and separates issues associated with constraints on use from allocations and priority amongst users.

This plan commits the Parties to the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources off the west coast of Canada through the goal of achieving healthy and productive marine and freshwater ecosystems.

### **Strategic Goal #2: Realize the full social and economic potential of the recreational fishery.**

This goal is consistent with the broad goal for all fisheries in the DFO Pacific Fisheries Reform Initiative. The potential of the recreational fishery is evident. The 2005 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada found that over 3.2 million adult anglers participated in a variety of recreational

fishing activities in Canada and contributed a total of \$7.5 billion to various local economies across Canada. Direct recreational fishing expenditures during fishing trips for transportation, food, lodging, fishing services and fishing supplies were \$2.5 billion. Recreational anglers from all over the world come to BC to enjoy our renowned fishing opportunities, generating wealth and employment. According to the 2005 survey over 3 million days were spent fishing in BC freshwater and 2.2 million days fishing in tidal waters, and anglers made major purchases and investments wholly attributable to recreational fishing of over \$557 million. Further, there has always been an important social aspect to the recreational fishery, which is considered by many to be an important part of BC life. It is important to ensure sustainable use of the resource so that future generations continue to enjoy active and vibrant fishing opportunities.

**Strategic Goal #3: Maintain and enhance a consultative framework which provides for a supportive relationship between governments and the recreational fishing community, and encourages a healthy and respectful dialogue with other users through inclusive and meaningful processes.**

DFO, in such documents as the Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon (WSP), has described a vision for an integrated planning and management process which encompasses harvest planning, watershed planning, and marine coastal planning forums at the watershed, ecosystem, and coast wide spatial scales. This vision also included key attributes of an integrated process which is necessary to build mutual trust between various interests. These include: inclusiveness, transparency, effectiveness, respect for consultation processes with First Nations, respect for other existing processes, and accountability.

This goal builds on the vision described in the WSP by supporting healthy and effective consultation processes in the recreational fishing community, and by supporting integrated processes at local, ecosystem, and the Pacific regional scale. DFO and the SFAB are formulating protocols and a process for providing advice between DFO and the SFAB.

**Strategic Goal #4: Ensure that the management of the recreational fishery is based on the best available information while taking into account local and traditional knowledge.**

Sustainable use is defined in the DFO WSP as the use of biological resources in a way and at a rate that does not lead to their long term decline, thereby maintaining the potential for future generations to meet their needs and aspirations. Implicit within this definition is a sound management framework based on the following characteristics:

1. Clear guidance through vision and principles, government and sector objectives, and a legislative and policy framework.
2. An effective process for input, evaluation of alternatives, and representative and transparent decision making. Supporting this process will be decision making tools, feedback mechanisms, and good communication protocols.

3. Adequate information to develop options and inform advisors and decision makers about impacts, managing uncertainty, benefits, and risks associated with alternatives.
4. An ability to implement, as well as effectively regulate, monitor and enforce compliance. A process for feeding back results into the process.

Through this plan, the parties have attempted to improve the clarity of guidance in management of the recreational fishery, and have committed to an enhanced consultative process. This goal addresses the need for adequate information, as the next step in ensuring sound management of the fishery.

### **Strategic Goal #5: Provide sustainable fishing opportunities which consider the needs of and foster the potential of the recreational fishery.**

Sustainable fishing opportunities should incorporate the opportunity to go fishing on a regular basis within a reasonable distance from one's home, with the reasonable expectation to catch a fish, without threatening the conservation requirements of the species intended to be caught. By fostering the potential of the recreational fishery – creating conditions which allow the potential social and economic benefits to be realized – management agencies and the recreational fishing community will ensure that sustainable fishing opportunities are in place for current and future generations.

### **Strategic Goal #6: Establish a framework for sharing responsibility for activities which benefit the recreational fishery.**

Recognizing the limited public funding and resources available for managing the fishery, resource users must share in the responsibility for conservation and for ensuring that fisheries resources are managed so that they benefit all Canadians. The rights of future generations to a similar or improved benefit are also the responsibility of both government and resource users. To achieve these aims, the recreational community and the sport fishing industry, which benefit directly from a healthy resource, will be encouraged to partner with government and other resource users to manage and protect the resource and its habitat. Users recognize that contributing to the cost associated with ensuring such benefits is necessary.

Many individuals in the recreational community have shown a willingness to share in the responsibility for managing the fishery resource and its habitat. As a community, it will be necessary to develop mechanisms which work on behalf of the community at large in the shared responsibility. This development work is underway.

Those who earn a living by providing services to the recreational fishery accept a greater share of the responsibility for conservation and management of the recreational fishery. This responsibility will be fulfilled through implementation of certification, standards, and best practices within the charter boat and lodge industry around activities such as catch recording and reporting.

The opportunity also exists for the public to share responsibility for the conservation, restoration, and enhancement of the resource and its habitat through community-based processes and volunteer organizations involved in various stewardship activities.

## **Strategic Goal #7: Promote understanding of the recreational fishery and recreational fisheries management practices.**

In this document, the sport fishing community, through the SFAB, has addressed various external factors affecting the recreational fishery. One of the remaining factors is the lack of understanding in the public at large on the nature and benefits of the fishery. There is a need to inform the public about the social and economic benefits of the recreational fishery, and to flag the connection between healthy ecosystems and fishing opportunities. There also is a need to better inform the public about the basis for management decisions, and the role of the SFAB in determining the outcome. Achieving this goal will ensure public trust and respect in the management process.

### **I. Next Steps**

Over the next several months this vision document will undergo review by the SFAB, DFO and Provincial Governments. Early in 2008, the document will go to a broader public review. We anticipate the final visions document will be available summer 2008.

In early 2008, we will begin development of the action and implementation plan. The provincial government, the SFAB, and DFO work continue to work collaboratively in this process.

A final document is anticipated by summer 2008.

### **J. A Brief Overview of the Pacific Fishery**

Recent information on the recreational fishery is available through several sources itemized below.

A brief overview of the fishery is presented based on these sources:

1) Interviews of anglers as part of the annual recreational creel surveys;

[http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/sci/sa/Recreational/GSCS/GSCSFAQ\\_e.htm](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/sci/sa/Recreational/GSCS/GSCSFAQ_e.htm)

2) Periodic national scale mail out surveys such as the recent report for 2005;

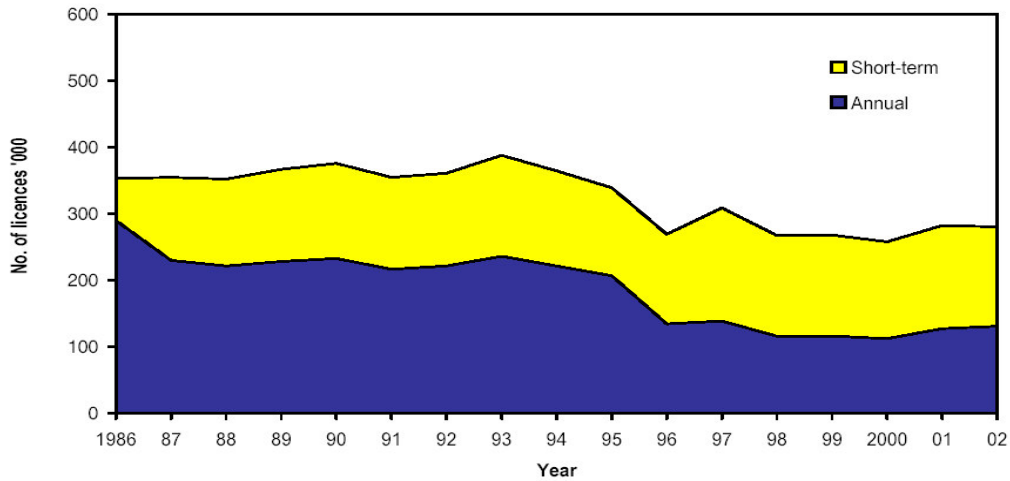
[http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/communic/statistics/recreational/canada/2005/index\\_e.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/communic/statistics/recreational/canada/2005/index_e.htm)

3) Specific analyses such as the 2004 BC Seafood and Recreational Fishing SWOT by GSGislason and Associates Ltd.

<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/fisheries/reports/SWOT/index.htm>

There are a variety of reasons people participate in the recreational fishery, such as for the sport of catching but not keeping a fish, for taking fish home to eat, or for the outdoor experience. Consequently, the best indicators of the level of activity are likely licence sales or total number of angler days. The 2005 national survey estimated 2.2 million angler days of activity in marine waters off BC from approximately 300,000 licensed anglers (Figure I-1).

Figure I-1. BC Tidal Recreational Fishing Licence Sales to Adults through 2002.



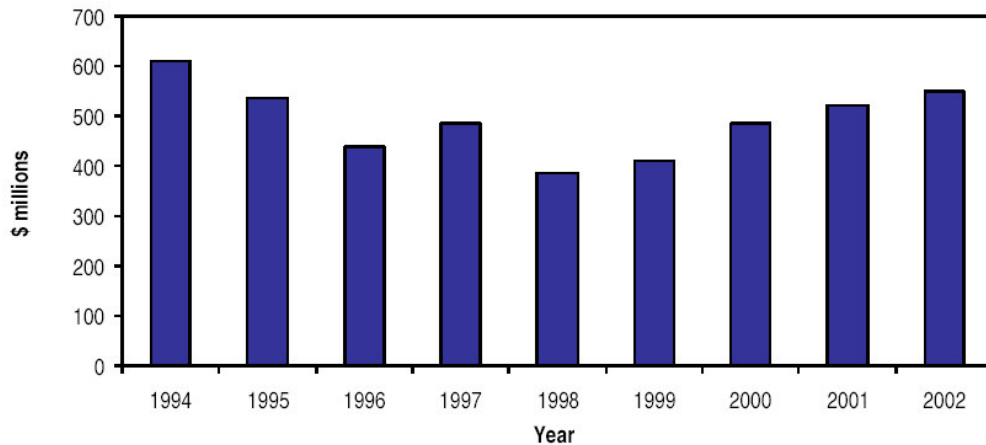
Note: Short term is 1 to 5 day licence.

Source: DFO

The catch is best estimated through creel surveys and direct reporting from guides and lodges. 2007 catch statistics are still being compiled, and will be incorporated in future versions of this document.

One measure of the value of the fishery is the direct expenditures made to go fishing. According to the 2002 GS Gislason & Assoc. analysis of recreational fisheries, in that year 333,800 licensed anglers contributed an estimated \$550 million dollars to the economy. The annual expenditures during the period 1994 through 2002 are shown in Figure I-3.

Figure I-3. BC tidal waters angling expenditures through 2002.



Source: GSGislason & Associates Ltd. estimates.

## K. Useful Links

### ***Federal Government links***

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

DFO Pacific Region: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/>

DFO Operational Policy Framework for Recreational Fisheries: ([http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/communic/fish\\_man/oper/OPF-PC\\_e.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/communic/fish_man/oper/OPF-PC_e.htm))

DFO Recreational Fishing Site: [http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/recfish/default\\_e.htm](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/recfish/default_e.htm)

DFO Pacific Fisheries Reform [http://www-comm.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pages/consultations/consultation2006/reform\\_e.htm](http://www-comm.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pages/consultations/consultation2006/reform_e.htm)

Transport Canada Office of Boating Safety: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/BoatingSafety/menu.htm>

SafeCanada.ca boating safety: [http://www.safecanada.ca/link\\_e.asp?category=7&topic=54](http://www.safecanada.ca/link_e.asp?category=7&topic=54)

Environment Canada: <http://www.ec.gc.ca>

### ***Provincial (British Columbia) Government links***

MOE: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/omfd/>

Tourism BC: <http://www.hellobc.com/en-CA/SightsActivitiesEvents/NaturalSightsParksWildlife/Fishing/BritishColumbia.htm?Lev1=8>

### ***Recreational Fishing links***

SFAB web page on the DFO website: [http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/recfish/Species/SFAB\\_e.htm](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/recfish/Species/SFAB_e.htm)

BCFishing.com: <http://www.bcfishing.com/>

## L. Glossary of Terms/Definitions

DFO – Fisheries and Oceans Canada

SFAB – Sport Fishing Advisory Board

MoE – Province of BC (Ministry of Environment)

Tidal Waters – includes the marine waters off British Columbia as well as portions of rivers which have tidal influence.

Anadromous – going upstream to spawn, usually from salt to fresh water.

Conservation - the protection, maintenance, and rehabilitation of genetic diversity, species, and ecosystems to sustain biodiversity and the continuance of evolutionary and natural production processes.

Sustainable Use - the use of biological resources in a way and at a rate that does not lead to their long term decline, thereby maintaining the potential for future generations to meet their needs and aspirations.

## M. Contact Information

The following contacts can provide further information on this document

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- Ron Kadowaki, DFO, Director of Fisheries Reform, Vancouver
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- Martin Paish, Senior Policy Advisor; Oceans & Marine Fisheries Branch, BC MoE Victoria

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