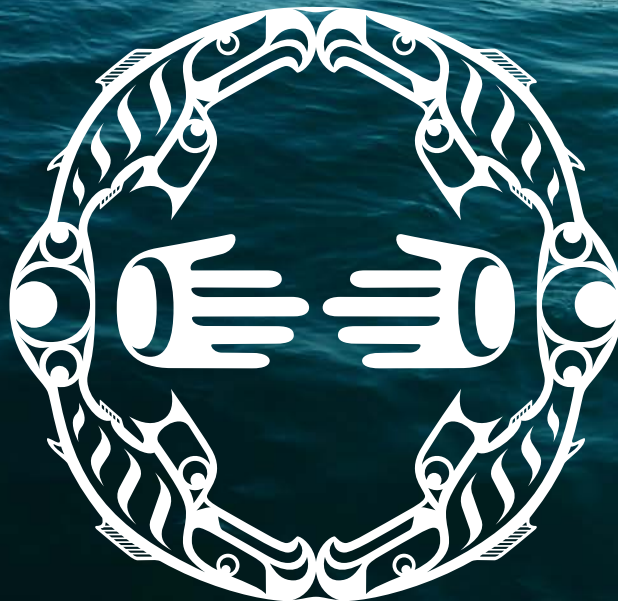




**First Nations
Fisheries Council**
of British Columbia

FNFC Strategic Plan

2021-2024



STRONGER TOGETHER

February 2022



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MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL

First Nations in the lands now called British Columbia (BC) have always respected, protected, and relied on fish and other aquatic resources. We are inextricably bound to our lands, waters and resources - this connection forms, in part, the very foundation of our cultures, wellbeing, and economies. Almost all of us are fishing peoples, and fisheries are at the centre of our way of life. The global outbreak of COVID-19 further highlighted the importance of our connection to lands, waters and resources.

As our ancestors did for thousands of years before us, we take seriously our responsibility to protect our natural environment and resources for future generations. Indigenous laws, knowledge, and decision-making processes proven through thousands of years of aquatic resource and habitat safeguarding means that today's First Nations have a critical role to play in addressing the accelerating challenges that waters in BC are facing. We are working to actively manage fisheries and ecosystems according to our inherent laws.

First Nations throughout BC are increasingly influencing the design and development of strategies and policies that impact and intersect with their rights and self-determination. They are actively asserting their rights and jurisdiction and revitalizing laws to strengthen outcomes for aquatic resources and habitats, both within their individual territories and collectively across BC.

The foremost priority of the First Nations Fisheries Council of BC (FNFC) is to coordinate First Nations political and technical capacity and develop a coherent and united voice among First Nations throughout BC. Helping build structures for effective governance and accountability is also a priority for FNFC. FNFC recognizes and respects the sovereignty and self-governance of all First Nations as Rights Holders. FNFC's role is to provide information and resources related to Pacific fisheries, and support First Nations' positions where collective interests align.

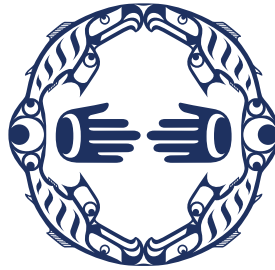
Planning into 2024, FNFC will advance the **BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan** through the implementation of its 2021-2024 strategic plan: Indigenous Policy Coordination - Stronger Together. Our overall goal is to facilitate and support First Nations collective capacity to generate transformative change in the governance and management of Pacific fisheries. The 2021-2024 Strategic Plan will move this important work forward by establishing the foundations needed to develop an enduring First Nations Fisheries Authority.

As we put these new building blocks in place, we will be working hard to develop the capacity and resources needed to strategically navigate the complex environment of legislation, regulation, and policy. We will help understand and expand Reconciliation framework agreements, treaties, and First Nations rights and jurisdiction. Establishing jurisdiction and authority is at the forefront of BC First Nations concerns in fisheries. Now, more than ever, it is absolutely critical that the First Nations of BC work together to protect the lands, waters, and resources of BC.

We are stronger together.



Hugh Braker, Chair, First Nations Fisheries Council



First Nations Fisheries Council of British Columbia

OUR VISION

- » We are responsible, as our ancestors were before us, for protecting our land, waters and resources, and passing on our traditional values and practices to future generations.
- » First Nations in BC will work together with respect for each other and the natural world to address issues in the fishery for our common good and for the well-being of our communities.
- » We will strive to maintain, and restore where necessary, healthy aquatic ecosystems and species.
- » We will work as partners and share management responsibility based on our ownership of our territories and our right to manage the fishery.
- » We will work with other governments and third parties to ensure recognition and respect of Aboriginal Title and Rights and Treaty Rights and to ensure conservation and appropriate management of the resource.

OUR MANDATE

The First Nations Fisheries Council of British Columbia (FNFC) works with and on behalf of First Nations in BC to protect and reconcile Aboriginal Title and Rights and Treaty Rights as they relate to fisheries and the health and protection of aquatic resources.

The FNFC will achieve this by working to:

- » Advance and protect First Nations title and rights related to fisheries and aquatic resources, including priority access for food, cultural and economic purposes.
- » Support First Nations to build and maintain capacity related to fishing, planning, policy, law, management and decision-making at various scales (local, regional, national, international).
- » Facilitate discussions related to the development of a British Columbia-wide, First Nations-based collaborative management framework that recognizes and respects First Nations jurisdiction, management authority and responsibilities.



OUR STRENGTHS

WE ARE CONVENORS

One of FNFC's biggest strengths is its ability to facilitate engagement among First Nations throughout the Province of BC and between Nations, governments and third parties, bringing together diverse regional perspectives, capacity and expertise. FNFC facilitates the building of bridges between parties that may have differing priorities or objectives. FNFC provides analysis of complex topics on both First Nations' and governments' positions, and builds processes to ensure appropriate conversations take place at appropriate levels.

WE ARE A RELIABLE KNOWLEDGE SOURCE ON:

- » The distinct and localized needs of 200+ First Nations in British Columbia
- » First Nations rights related to fisheries and aquatic resources and habitats
- » The health and protection of marine and freshwater aquatic resources
- » Fisheries and aquatic resource management, policy, law, governance, economic development, and Indigenous knowledge sources.

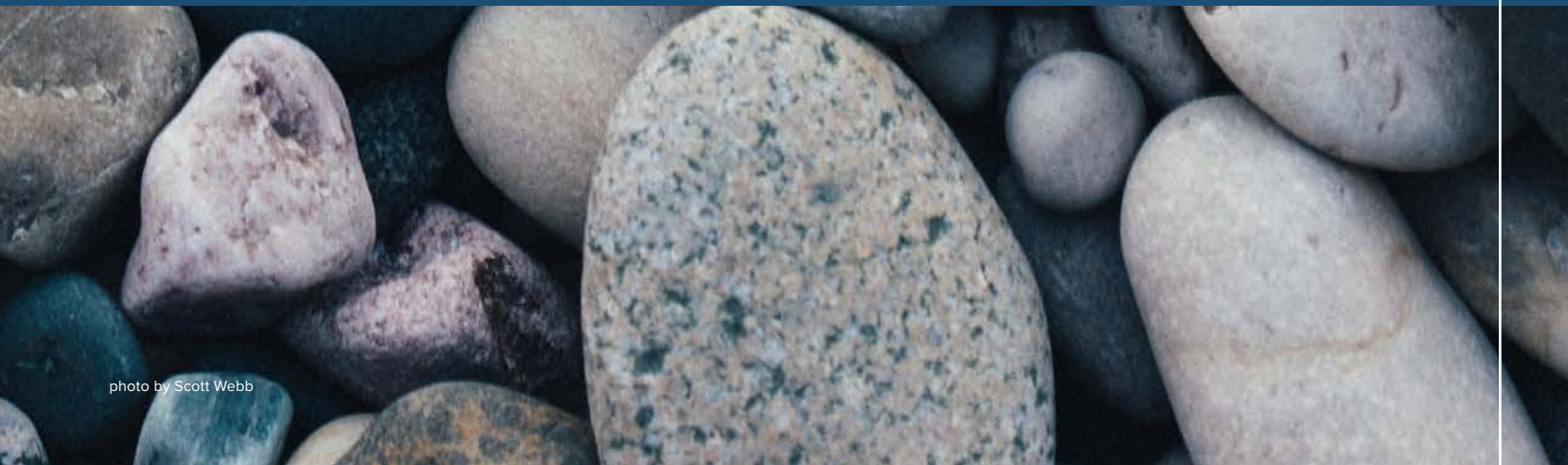




photo from FNFC collection

WE HAVE A POWERFUL MANDATE

FNFC’s mandate (outlined in the BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan) was created by chiefs in assembly in 2007 and further ratified by the participants at the 2009 Fall Fisheries Assembly in Nanaimo, BC, and endorsed by resolution of the BC Assembly of First Nations, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the First Nations Summit. This mandate gives FNFC a unique, trusted position in the First Nations fisheries space that no other organization is able to occupy.

WE CREATE PROVINCE-WIDE IMPACT

For more than a decade, FNFC has elevated First Nations voices in fisheries management. We have developed a stable and predictable environment to convene parties using a model that ensures that the right conversations are taking place at appropriate scales. We identify matters of common concern, convene First Nations to discuss and arrive at coherent recommendations and advice.

WE OPERATE THROUGH A TRUSTED REGIONAL MODEL OF ENGAGEMENT

FNFC has a strong and coordinated three-tier regional engagement model which allows us to engage with regional First Nations organizations and communities throughout BC. For FNFC, it is imperative that we support the development of an inclusive and transparent mechanism that provides First Nations the opportunity to advance collective interests.

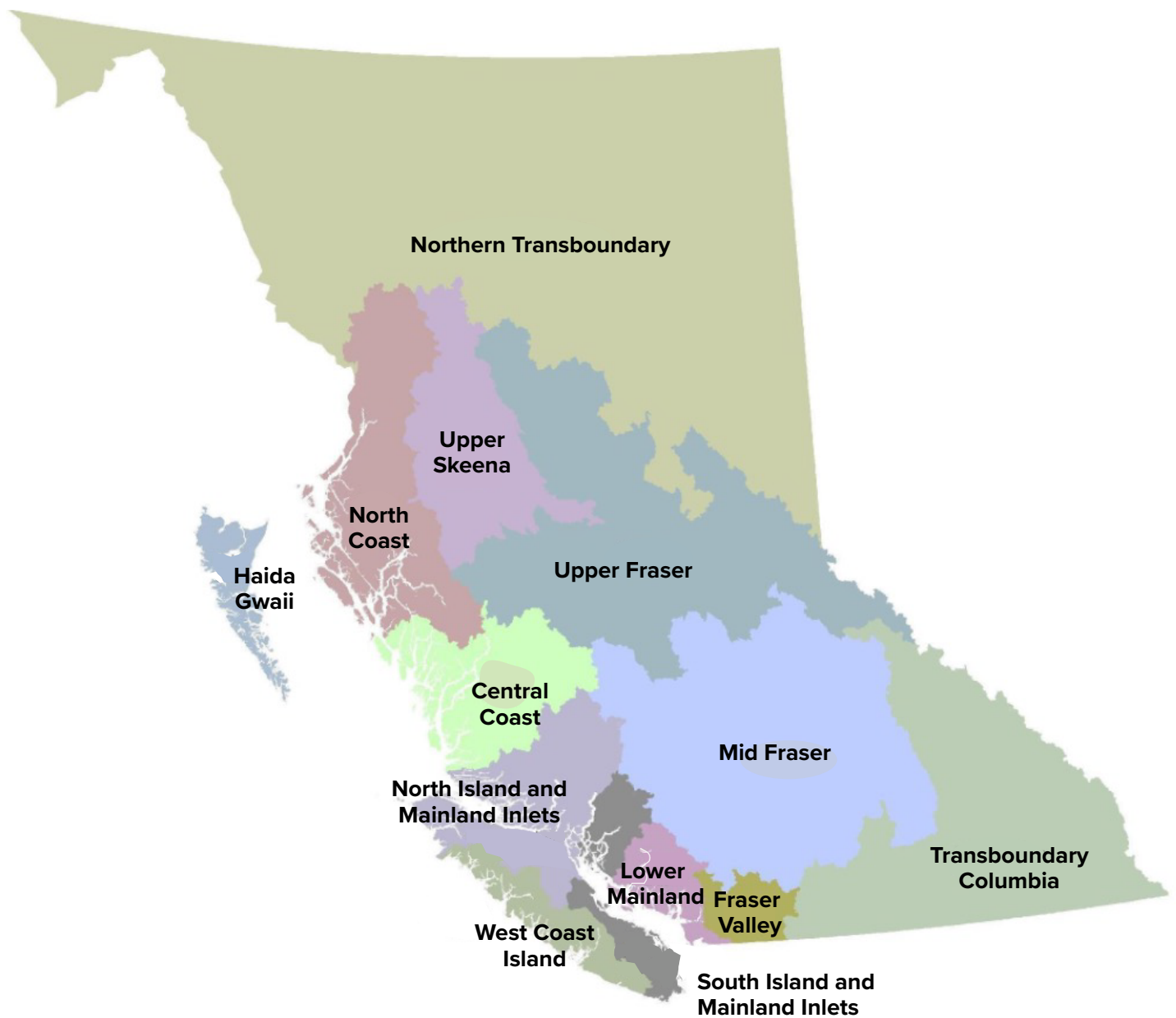
3-TIER ENGAGEMENT MODEL

> Tier 1	> Tier 2	> Tier 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications or management processes open to First Nations only. • Due to the geographic range and migration of marine species, fisheries management involves multiple First Nations at various scales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement processes between federal and/or provincial governments and one or more First Nations. • Goal is information sharing or consultation on fisheries management issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications or engagement processes that involve DFO, First Nations, and other stakeholders. • E.g., fishers, invested stakeholders from within the industry, NGOs, etc.

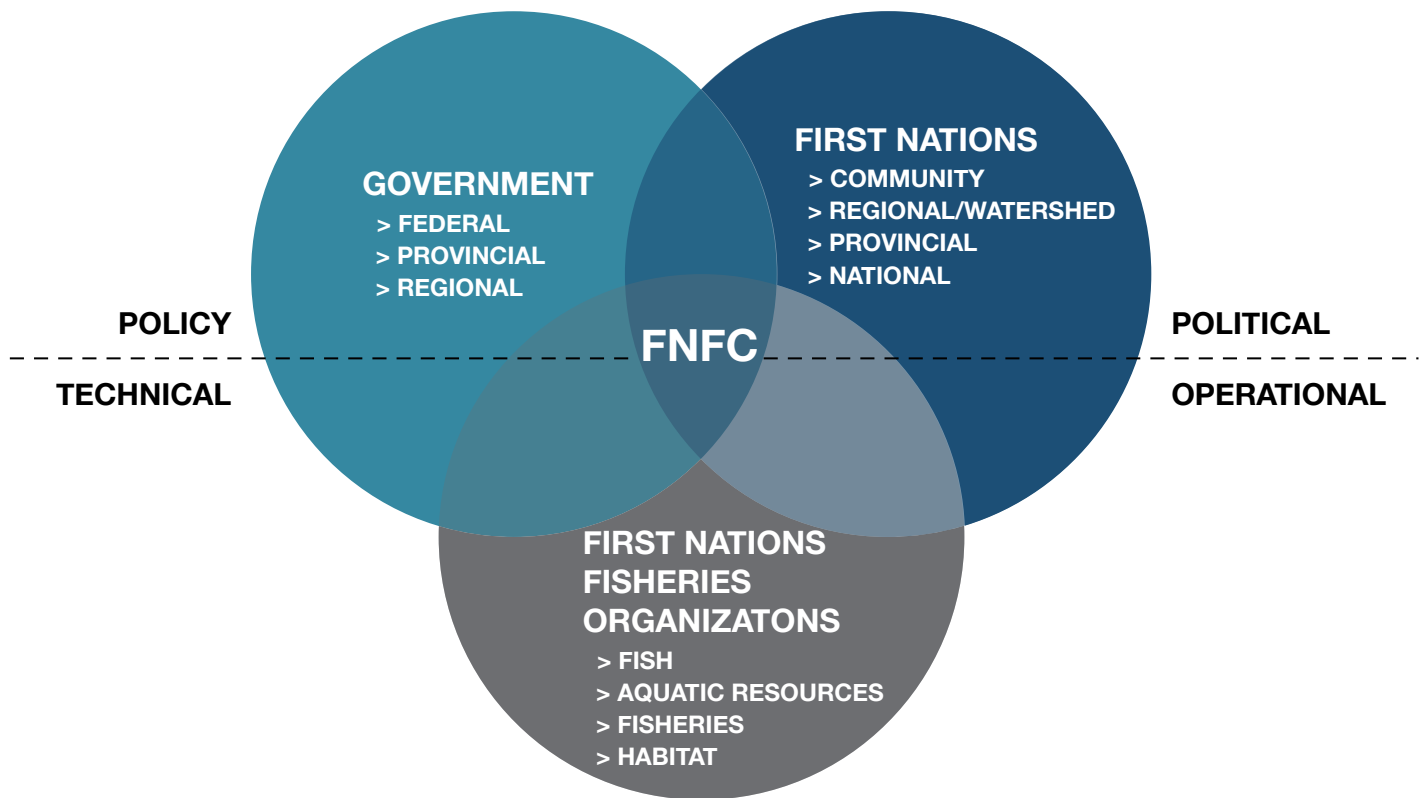


OUR STRUCTURE AND REGIONS

- » FNFC's Executive Council is composed of delegates selected by First Nations in each of BC's 14 geographic regions, as identified by First Nations in BC.
- » One delegate per region is appointed to sit on the Council for a three-year term.
- » Fourteen delegates make up the membership of FNFC.



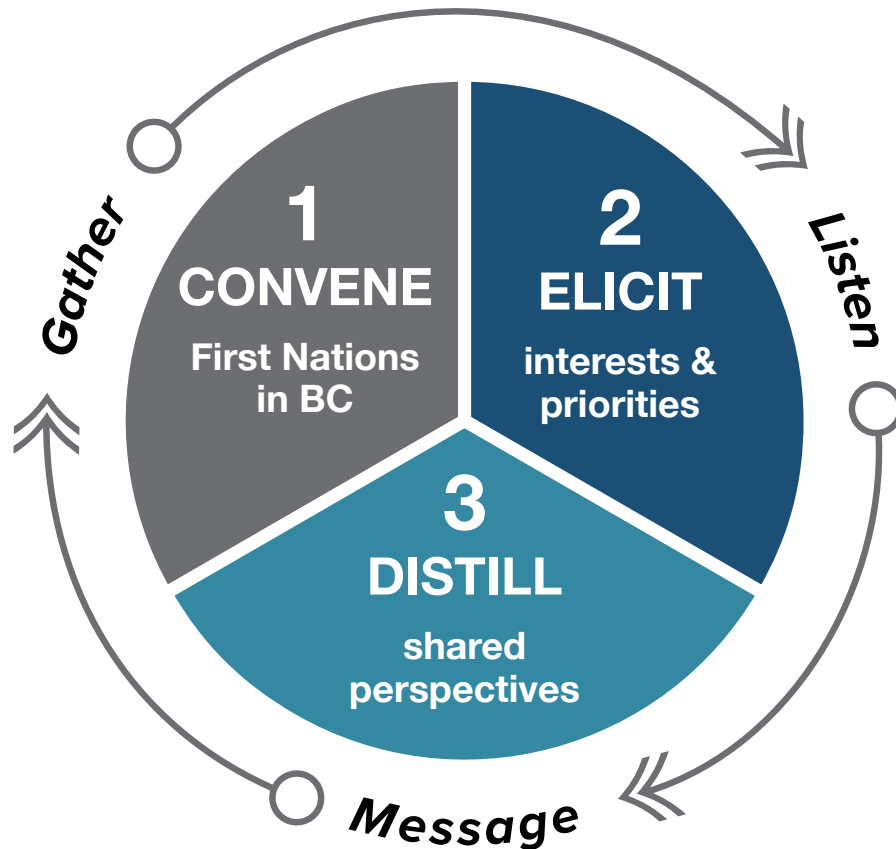
OUR FUNCTION AND POSITIONING



COHERENT PROCESSES AND COHESIVE MESSAGING

FNFC functions to facilitate the development of a coherent process and cohesive message for cooperation and collaboration among First Nations and between First Nations and government.

FNFC supports the necessary capacity and relationships that enable First Nations to influence the integrated planning and management of fisheries, fish, aquatic resources and aquatic habitat. This in turn creates collective action and supports First Nations to be stronger while working together.



FNFC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

1. **CONVENE** First Nations and government through effective mechanisms that advance First Nations priorities and interests as they relate to fisheries and the health and protection of aquatic resources to identify key issues of common and broad concern.
2. **ELICIT** the interests and desired outcomes of First Nations and government to find shared objectives to support coherent advice and messaging. This is made possible by our collaborative relationships with First Nations, government, and other partners.
3. **DISTILL** the many perspectives of First Nations into a cohesive voice regarding fish, fisheries, and aquatic resource matters to influence policy and program development, legislation, and decision-making. This results in clear First Nations priorities and interests informing the government in collaborative development of programs and policies.

ADVANCING FIRST NATIONS JURISDICTION AND AUTHORITY IN FISHERIES

Since 2011, FNFC has worked diligently to increase First Nations influence in the integrated planning and management of fisheries, fish, aquatic resources, and aquatic habitat. Every three years, FNFC reviews and updates its strategic plan to build on the successes of previous strategic plans, opportunities and lessons learned through challenges and unanticipated outcomes.



2012-2015: DEVELOPING A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES IN BC

» STRATEGIC FOCUS: BUILDING A COHESIVE VOICE

The FNFC mandate arises from the 2007 BC First Nations Action Plan and the follow up 2010 All Chiefs' Task Force Report. The 2010 report indicated that First Nations throughout BC continue to speak in a fragmented voice. As a result of these findings, the All Chiefs' Task Force directed and mandated FNFC to build structures and processes designed to create a coherent and more cohesive voice among First Nations to advance First Nations interests. FNFC began working alongside First Nations to design and build relationship processes to support the formation of a united First Nations' fisheries voice on matters of broad concern. Work completed in this strategic planning cycle includes establishing a charter process with First Nations across BC which supports FNFC's Commitment to Action (C2A) model with DFO, Transport Canada and the Province of BC.

2015-2018: CHARTING A COLLABORATIVE COURSE FORWARD

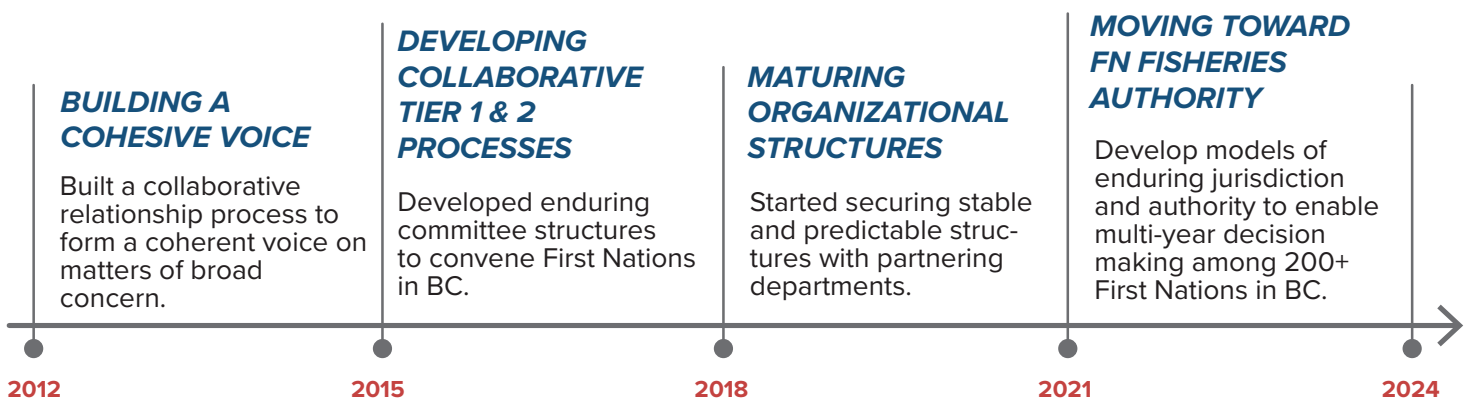
» STRATEGIC FOCUS: DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE TIER 1 AND 2 PROCESSES

FNFC's mandate requires that we work through an inclusive, equitable, and transparent mechanism that provides First Nations the opportunity to advance collective interests. During this strategic planning cycle, FNFC developed sustainable, enduring committee structures to convene First Nations throughout BC on specific priority matters. FNFC and First Nations established and implemented a three-tiered scale of engagement to engage with First Nations as well as multi-sectoral partnerships using evidence-based, traditionally grounded engagement approaches. FNFC's 3-Tier Engagement Process is trusted and appreciated by First Nations, government and third-party sector partners that FNFC works to support.

2019-2021: TRANSFORMING RELATIONSHIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL INDIGENOUS FISHERIES

» STRATEGIC FOCUS: MATURE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Stable and predictable structures with federal and provincial partnering departments is key to scaling conversations and developing technical initiatives with First Nations across BC and government. FNFC developed these structures through the shared Commitment to Action and Results Accord (C2AR). FNFC collaborated with Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Canadian Coast Guard to support and strengthen First Nations engagement in oceans protection planning policy and program design.





INDIGENOUS POLICY COORDINATION *STRONGER TOGETHER*

FNFC 2021–2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

TOWARDS FIRST NATIONS JURISDICTION AND AUTHORITY IN FISHERIES

To reduce and eliminate the barriers to First Nations aspirations for jurisdiction and authority, First Nations, government and supporting organizations must commit to changing current legislation, policies and practices and work together to establish a new paradigm in fisheries. FNFC will continue to drive meaningful First Nations engagement and collaboration in aquatic habitat, resources, and fisheries management through structures that facilitate decision-making among the 200+ First Nations in BC.



Changing the status quo requires the strength of aggregate numbers of First Nations invested in creating legislative and regulatory change.

From 2021 to 2024, FNFC will advance the *BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan* by building First Nations collective capacity to generate systemic and transformative change within fisheries in BC.

Specifically, FNFC will focus on increasing our influence at the federal level while concurrently building First Nations' strength and capacity to work collaboratively with each other, and in partnership with government to update and implement laws, legislation and policy to be consistent with the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and reconciliation.

OUR THREE PRIORITY AREAS FOR 2021-2024 ARE:

- 1. PROTECTING AND RESTORING PACIFIC SALMON**
- 2. SAFEGUARDING HABITAT AND RESPONDING TO THREATS**
- 3. BUILDING SOLID ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

Associated goals and outcomes per priority area are detailed in the following pages.



photo by Dylan Ferreira



photo by Rachel Elliott



PRIORITY 1

PROTECT AND RESTORE PACIFIC SALMON

BC waters are home to some of the most productive, yet severely threatened salmon stocks in the world. Wild Pacific salmon has declined by 93% over the last thirty years¹ from disruptions caused by anthropogenic impacts, including the urbanization, industrialization and commodification of BC's landscape and resources. To transform how salmon is currently managed in BC, FNFC will convene First Nations to support them in collectively working across governments and territories to address threats specific to each stage of the salmon life cycle.

» STRATEGIES:

1. ALIGN FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL SALMON RECOVERY POLICIES WITH FIRST NATIONS OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 **Facilitate the development of coherent advice to advance First Nations' priorities and interests to Crown to better influence salmon policy development and inform salmon programs.**

Desired Impact: A policy team is developed and sustained within FNFC. Tier 1 Policy Forum increase capacity of First Nations to influence salmon policy and better understand issues related to salmon and salmon conservation

- 1.2 **Build the capacity of FNFC Council delegates as ambassadors to their regions and expand their influence at the strategic and political levels.**

Desired Impact: Regional strategies promoting a collective voice on First Nations legislative and policy priorities.

1 Government of Canada, Budget 2021: A Recovery Plan for Jobs, Growth, and Resilience, 2021.



Event at Musqueam



2. CREATE STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE CONVERSATIONS AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS

2.1 *Develop and implement a strategy that identifies strong advocates for First Nations at all levels (e.g., political, operational, technical).*

Desired Impact: identification of subject matter experts to advance priority areas of focus for the development of collaborative management regime change to existing salmon management and policy structures.

2.2 *Facilitate appropriate conversations at council, committee, and regional levels to collaboratively transform and improve salmon management strategies within each stage of the salmon life cycle to help ensure sustainable and healthy populations.*

Desired Impact: A cohesive province-wide Pacific salmon recovery strategy.

3. BUILD FIRST NATIONS PARTNERSHIPS

3.1 *Create strategic buy-in between and among First Nations to work together on Pacific salmon recovery strategies to advance a consistent message to governments.*

Desired Impact: Establish meaningful and appropriate structures between and among First Nations to create a functional management forum facilitating the collaboration between First Nations, the Province of BC, and the Government of Canada.

3.2 *Build capacity to help First Nations advance their interests at an international level.*

Desired Impact: Pacific Salmon Commission First Nations Caucus Committee succession, communications, and revenue development strategies are created and supported.



photo by David Luggi



photo by James Wheeler

PRIORITY 2

SAFEGUARD HABITAT AND RESPOND TO THREATS

The aquatic environment is fundamental to the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of First Nations communities. Today these values are at great risk due to the deteriorating health of marine and freshwater ecosystems as well as the ecological and cultural impacts of offshore and foreshore developments. This damage undermines First Nations' livelihoods, health outcomes and community food security. To stop the major declines that aquatic species and habitats in BC currently face, First Nations and all levels of government must take joint action to safeguard aquatic habitats and resources growing cumulative impacts.

» STRATEGIES:

1. DEVELOP ROBUST, COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTIONS

1.1 *Build capacity of First Nations to advance collective monitoring and stewardship opportunities.*

Desired Impact: Strengthen and grow FNFC integrated natural resource concepts to support an Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinating capacity supported by the Indigenous Technical Advisory network.

1.2 *Create water management strategies to protect, and help ensure clean and abundant water supply for fish with adequate flow regimes and usage.*

Desired Impact: Establish a Provincial water table for First Nations and government collaboration. Develop a First Nation water caucus to engage at water roundtables and assist provincial regulatory reviews consistent with DRIPA.



photo by Anastase Maragos



photo by Frank Busch

2. BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO DEVELOP FIRST NATIONS-LED ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION STRATEGIES FOR FISH HABITAT

2.1 *Create an FNFC Habitat and Environmental Protection team.*

Desired Impact: Build solid and enduring team structure, work plans, and desired outcomes for a Habitat and Environmental Protection sector at FNFC. Support research regarding the concept of Salmon Parks in support of a holistic approach to strategic Pacific Salmon Sustainability responses, including building partnerships and collaborating with Indigenous partners.

2.2 *Diversify and expand funding sources to create sustainable opportunities for indigenous-led habitat protection and restoration initiatives.*

Desired Impact: First Nations Fisheries Charity Fund Society marketing and communications strategy.

3. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORT FIRST NATIONS' ABILITIES TO ACTIVELY EXERCISE GOVERNANCE AND JURISDICTION FOR FISH HABITAT PROTECTION

3.1 *Facilitate structured process to identify and resource First Nations habitat projects of common interest.*

Desired Impact: Identify critical areas for habitat restoration and protection.

3.2 *Leverage opportunities provided through formalized partnerships with government and stakeholder organizations (e.g., non-governmental organizations and private sector stakeholders) to insert First Nation voices into decision-making structures and processes regarding habitat protection in government-led projects and legislation.*

Desired Impact: Collaborative structures and processes through OPP, PSSI and TC are updated to support the development of a minimum of one tripartite Policy Table with equal participation and decision-making between First Nations, the Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia.



photo by Council of the Haida Nation



photo by Penny White

PRIORITY 3

BUILD SOLID ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

First Nations have interests in achieving greater economic returns from their respective fisheries. The scope of First Nations fisheries, and the disposition of fish, includes, but is not limited to fisheries for food, social, and ceremonial purposes. Many First Nation fishers and even entire communities, are heavily involved in and reliant on the capture fishery portion of the commercial sector. First Nations are committed to supporting the sustainable growth of BC's diverse economies, cultures, and way of life now, and for the future.

» STRATEGIES:

1. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT GROW FIRST NATIONS INCLUSION IN FISHERIES, DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES, AND MARINE ECONOMIES

1.1 *Build processes and capacity to support First Nations' influence in government-led blue economy planning initiatives.*

Desired Impact: Inclusion in working groups and final documents describing legislation and policies relating to Aquaculture act development, Blue Economy, OPP, Pacific Commercial License reform and Fleet rationalization.

1.2 *Facilitate the creation of a management framework that increases Indigenous participation in enhancement activities (i.e., hatchery aquaculture), and updates regulations, policies, and permits.*

Desired Impact: Engagement in legislative and policy working groups, inclusion in formal management.

2. DEVELOP A PROVINCE-WIDE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING A FORUM OR ASSOCIATION THAT CONVENES INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS TO MORE EFFECTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE ECONOMIC FISHERY, INCLUDING THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR

2.1 *Work within this forum to update and review policy and regulations that could improve and diversify economic performance from the full value chain of First Nations fisheries.*



photo by Garrett Parker



gathering on court steps - Uu-a-thluk

2.2 Strengthen First Nation capacity to participate in fisheries and marine-focused business to support operational success and independence of First Nations in BC. Explore and facilitate opportunities allowing for diversity of long-term and self-sufficient First Nations business initiatives in the fisheries, marine sector, and overall value chain.

Desired Impact: A collaborative structure among First Nations fishery support organizations to examine the full spectrum of fishery-focused opportunities, and design strategies to expand indigenous participation in the full fisheries value chain (e.g., Native Fishing Association, Native Brotherhood of BC, PICFI-CFE network, etc.)

2.3 Develop opportunities for First Nations in responsible aquaculture ventures, including freshwater aquaculture, shellfish aquaculture, and land-based closed containment aquaculture via technical work.

Desired Impact: Design a strategy or discussion paper outlining a solid indigenous entrepreneurial network approach.

3. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS THAT GROW FIRST NATIONS' SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FISHERIES AND MARINE ECONOMIES

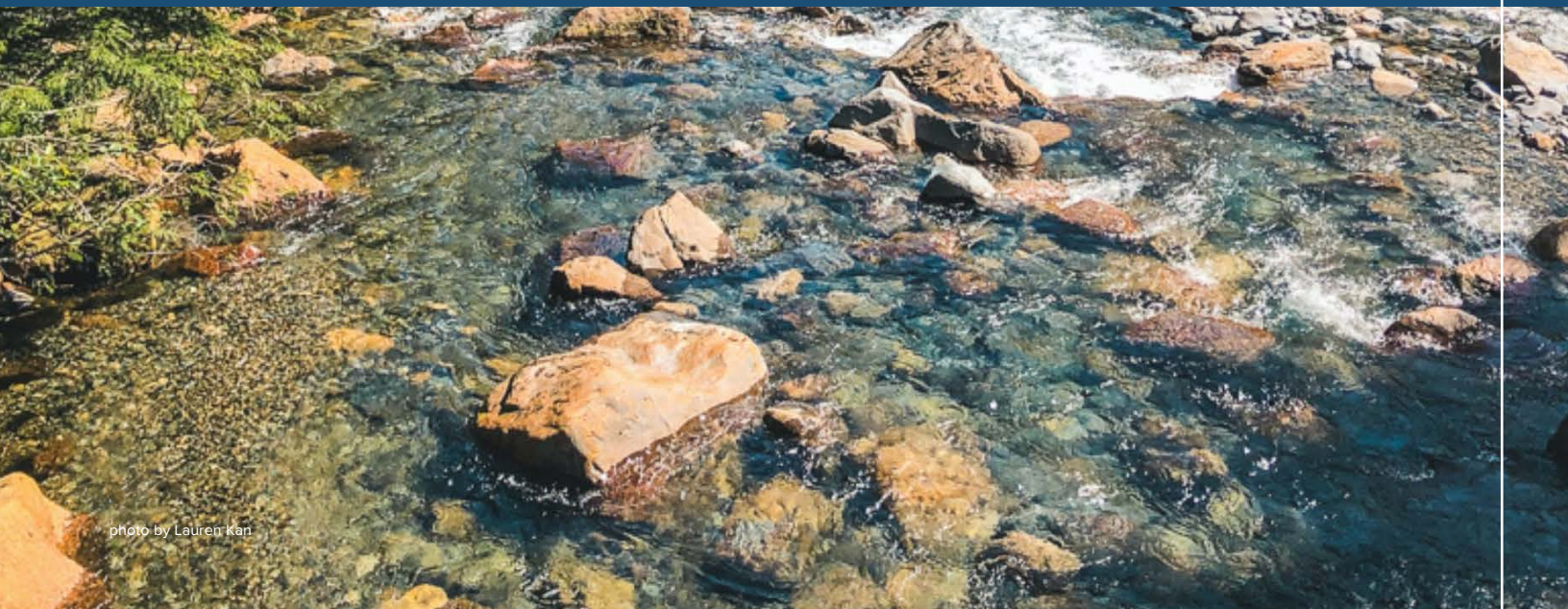
3.1 Support the development of an association of allies within the Indigenous commercial sector, with shared objectives and interests and collaborate with them to develop a First Nations Commercial Fisheries Strategy that ensures the livelihoods of Indigenous fishers can be maintained.

Desired Impact: A coordinated approach to increase the number of alliances within the indigenous commercial organizations.

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

FNFC strives to develop a strong, united voice in fisheries that supports Aboriginal Title and Rights and Treaty Rights and the diverse values and interests of First Nations across British Columbia. FNFC's strong, coordinated regional model allows us to engage with regional First Nations organizations and communities throughout BC. Our effective communication mechanisms support this engagement.

The ability to facilitate engagement among First Nations and between Nations, governments and third parties, bringing together diverse regional perspectives, capacity and expertise from across the province, is one of FNFC's key strengths. Our communications aim to build bridges between parties who can have differing objectives and priorities related to the protection, conservation and management of First Nations fisheries and aquatic resources and the protection of First Nations fishing rights. As experts, we serve as information hubs providing analysis of complex topics for government and First Nations audiences, and build processes to ensure appropriate conversations take place at the right levels.





KEY AUDIENCES

From 2021-2024, FNFC will focus on developing key audiences. Each of these audiences will receive tailored content created to increase engagement with the FNFC brand. To manage the growing demand for knowledge and to improve the understanding of FNFC's impact and value, we will reinforce our position as thought leaders through our website which serves as an interactive knowledge source. We will further showcase our work via videos, communiques, social media and the Annual Fall Assembly.

Internal staff and council. Strengthening two-way communication with all members of staff and Council and building their capacity will form the foundation for FNFC engagement. Our aim is to empower council delegates to act as ambassadors for their regions and facilitate staff knowledge sharing.

First Nations communities in BC. FNFC is mandated to facilitate a cohesive voice among the 200+ First Nations in fisheries. To facilitate this process, we must position FNFC as experts and ensure that these communities understand (a) the benefits of engaging with FNFC and (b) the local impact of the broad policies discussed via FNFC processes. To build awareness and improve engagement within First Nations communities, we place First Nations at the heart of ongoing communications about the powerful relationship of Indigenous communities in BC with fisheries, aquatic resources and habitat.

First Nations Regional Organizations. First Nation regional organizations reflect the diversity in geography, expertise, and perspectives of the many First Nations of BC. To highlight more regional issues and further strengthen the bond with these organisations, FNFC will engage directly with First Nation regional organizations to highlight their stories, experiences and knowledge from all regions.

First Nation Fisheries Experts. To solidify its position in the fisheries space, FNFC will be establishing hubs that facilitate communication and knowledge-building among technical professionals and feed into higher level policy development.

Governments. Government entities such as DFO or the Province of BC play a key role in FNFC's work. Communications with the government require a two-pronged approach of, on one hand, showcasing FNFC's ability to deliver as engagement experts in the fisheries space and, on the other hand, communicate the information as an advocate for First Nations.

Invested stakeholders and non-governmental organizations. As FNFC aims to deliver on its environmental and economic priorities, we anticipate the need to communicate and collaborate with the commercial fisheries and NGO sectors. These strategies will be determined along with other communication activity plans.

The detailed communication and engagement strategies will be outlined in the FNFC Communications Plan. FNFC will also develop a marketing plan to further solidify its financial position.

CHARTING A COURSE FORWARD

Aquatic ecosystems are the foundation of First Nations social networks and economies. With the decline of fisheries and growing threats to aquatic habitats, the Crown, First Nations and governments around the world are realizing the need for an increasingly collaborative approach to fisheries management.

It is the inherent and constitutional right of First Nations to manage and protect fisheries and aquatic resources. Competing legislation and initiatives at federal and provincial scales concerning issues like aquaculture, salmon, climate change, international agreements, the blue economy, require structures to enable conversations among First Nations in BC with a broad spectrum of literacy and capacity. The governance structures among 200+ nations are complex, and that complexity grows when discussing migrating stocks, inland and marine water and habitats.

At FNFC, it is our responsibility to support effective First Nations in engagement in fisheries issues with a coherent, collective voice. The policy forum where First Nations in BC could participate with a unified voice remains undeveloped. We will aim to increase influence at the federal level while concurrently building strength to work collaboratively and in partnerships to update laws, legislation and policy to be consistent with UNDRIP and reconciliation.

In the environment of reconciliation, UNDRIP and the ten Principles, the Crown is starting to take steps to improve engagement with First Nations in areas where there is a potential to infringe on First Nations rights. For the first time in Canadian history, both the Federal and BC governments have simultaneously expressed a willingness to move toward reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and BC's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

The government must invest in First Nations early and often to enable decision-making that is more reflective of First Nations rights and priority of access. Resourcing First Nations will build their capacity to engage in the design and development of strategies and policies that impact and intersect with their rights and self-determination. Enduring multi-year programs and resources are necessary to create an effective policy forum and sustain engagement at all levels.

It is time to recognize and empower First Nations to take advantage of their unique place in managing fisheries and environmental challenges that waters in BC are facing. They have stewarded aquatic resources according to traditional laws and governance structures for thousands of years. The intergenerational sharing of knowledge about harvesting methods, food preparation and preservation, and the interconnectedness of ecosystems in each Nation's territory supports deep-rooted understanding of these environments.

STRONGER TOGETHER

We work to build collaboration and a united voice among BC First Nations.





STRONGER TOGETHER

We work to build collaboration and a united voice among BC First Nations.

CAPACITY BUILDING

We support First Nations in advancing their collective interests.



COHERENT PROCESSES

We build processes to support effective engagement among First Nations, and between First Nations and governments as well as sectoral stakeholders.



IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY

We support First Nations to advance their rights, leadership and influence through various fisheries and aquatic resource initiatives.



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

We support First Nations, governments and third parties with various requests related to fisheries and associated topics.

KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES

We provide access to specialized knowledge and resources pertaining to fisheries and associated topics.





**First Nations
Fisheries Council**
of British Columbia

