

Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council - IKANAWTIKET

Proposed Addition
of the Atlantic Salmon,
Gaspé-Southern Gulf of
St. Lawrence Population to the
List of Wildlife Species at Risk
under the Species at Risk Act

A Noted Accumulation of Infringements on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights at a Regional Level Requiring Accommodation and the Full and Effective Participation of the Traditional Ancestral Homelands Aboriginal Peoples Henceforth

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I. Overview

On January 22, 2013 the Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council (MAPC) met with Species at Risk Act (SARA) officials of DFO-Gulf to discuss the proposed Listing of Atlantic Salmon, Gaspé-Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Designatable Unit (Gaspé-SGoSL) as Special Concern under SARA. The purpose of the meeting was to begin discussions on the status, management, and initial views from a regional Designatable Unit (DU) perspective. The regional meeting was advantageous in providing some foundational knowledge at a regional DU scale, which will facilitate discussion with the Traditional Ancestral Homelands Aboriginal Peoples on Gaspé-SGoSL salmon conservation and management, e.g., at provincial, Salmon Fishing Area (SFA), or watershed level.

The MAPC partner Native Councils of the Native Council of Nova Scotia (NCNS), the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council (NBAPC), and the Native Council of Prince Edward Island (NCPEI), and their Aboriginal Communal Commercial Fisheries Entities (ACCFEs) of Mime'j Seafoods, Aboriginal Seafood Network, and L'nu Fisheries, respectively, and their Natural Life Harvesting Regimes of the Netukulimkewe'l Commission, Najiwsetaq/Nomehs, and Kelewatl Commission, respectively, as well as their regional intergovernmental partnerships of the Maritime Aboriginal Aquatic Resources Secretariate (MAPC-MAARS) and IKANAWTIKET appreciate the opportunity to begin holding regional discussions on the proposed SARA Listing of this important species.

Atlantic Salmon are vital to the Mi'kmaq/Maliseet/Passamaquoddy/Aboriginal Peoples. Given the Endangered or Threatened status of most rivers in the Bay of Fundy, Nova Scotia Southern Uplands, and Cape Breton, the Gaspé-SGoSL DU is particularly important as some of the Gaspé-SGoSL rivers support the last viable fishing areas for Aboriginal Peoples to exercise Aboriginal and Treaty Rights to fish Atlantic Salmon in the Maritimes.

II. Accumulation of Infringements on Aboriginal, Treaty, and Other Rights

DFO was made aware of the on-going specific issue of the accumulation of infringements on the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of the Traditional Ancestral Homelands Aboriginal Peoples as a result of the continued loss of salmon from a multitude of rivers in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and PEI. The Crown has a special relationship with our community of Aboriginal Peoples as Heirs of Treaty Rights and Beneficiaries of Aboriginal Rights and Other Rights guaranteed and recognized by the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Although the proposed SARA Listing of Special Concern for the Gaspé-SGoSL DU would not necessarily invoke SARA s. 32, 33, or 58 prohibitions, several concurrent proposed SARA Listings for other DUs (e.g., NS Southern Uplands, outer Bay of Fundy, Eastern Cape Breton, as well as the current SARA Listing of inner Bay of Fundy salmon) would invoke those general prohibitions on killing, harming, altering, etc. The on-the-water results will create an even greater shift of fishers and recreational anglers away from those rivers and towards Gaspé-SGoSL rivers, likely resulting in more conflict over salmon in the Maritimes Provinces.

MAPC requires diligent management of Gaspé-SGoSL rivers to protect the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of Aboriginal Peoples to fish Atlantic Salmon within our Traditional Ancestral Homelands. Although the Gaspé-SGoSL DU proposed SARA Listing of Special Concern, on its own, may not directly invoke prohibitions, the several proposed SARA Listings and one current SARA Listing encompassing all other rivers in the Maritimes Provinces does derogate the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of the Traditional Ancestral Homelands Aboriginal Peoples to access and use as usual and in our preferred manner, within all watersheds, fish throughout our Traditional Ancestral Homelands and Territories.

Accommodation and/or compensation for that derogation could very well significantly involve or drastically affect the on-going management of Gaspé-SGoSL salmon and their habitats.

MAPC and the partner Native Councils agree that the intent of SARA is to provide legal protection for endangered and threatened populations, ensure adequate management of special concern populations, and encourage the involvement of Canadians and Aboriginal Peoples in the conservation and sustainable use of natural life. We also recognize the higher reason, expressed in the opening of the SARA preamble, that SARA is foremost a recognition and means to protect Canada's natural heritage, as an integral part of our national identity and history, and also to recognize the value that Canadian's place on natural life, in all its forms.

Also included in SARA is the provision that nothing in the Act shall abrogate or derogate the Aboriginal or Treaty Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada (s. 3). This provision overrides all of the other SARA provisions and must be honoured.

The two realities of SARA, conservation and non-abrogation/non-derogation of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, requires DFO to diligently work with Aboriginal Peoples representatives to invite and accommodate the full and effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples to meet both objectives. This is especially true for our community of Mi'kmaq/Maliseet/Passamaquoddy/ Aboriginal Peoples who continue throughout our Traditional Ancestral Homelands of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and PEI, who are, on the one hand, attempting to conserve species and habitats within our Traditional Ancestral Homelands and Territories, as is required by our traditional culture, teachings, and distinctive spiritual relationship with Creation, and on the other hand are revitalizing traditional culture, traditional practices, traditional foods, languages, etc., as we move forward as self-determinant Aboriginal Peoples within the Federation of the Peoples of Canada.

National and international calls demand Canada to reconcile its colonial past of dispossession of Aboriginal lands, disinheritance of Aboriginal identity, and denial of Aboriginal Rights. Great care must be taken by DFO to ensure that its modern regulations, policies, strategies, and practices are supportive, and do not unintentionally erode Aboriginal Rights or Treaty Rights or prevent the development of Aboriginal Peoples as distinctive Peoples within the Federation of the Peoples of Canada.

Canada has both a Constitutional obligation to protect the Aboriginal, Treaty, and Other Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada and also a human rights obligation under the United Nations

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIPs) to consult and cooperate with our Aboriginal community to achieve the ends of UNDRIPs, which specifically includes:

- the conservation, protection, and productive capacity of our Traditional Ancestral Homelands (Art. 29) and
- the right to freely pursue our own economic, social, and cultural development (Art. 3).

Canada does not have the right to engage in the slow and steady marginalization of the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, or Passamaquoddy Peoples, as distinctive Aboriginal Peoples – a marginalization which we organized to fight to stop and reverse through reconciliation.

The Mi'kmaq/Maliseet/Passamaquoddy/Aboriginal Peoples represented by the MAPC partner Native Councils are direct Heirs to Treaty Liberties and Beneficiaries of Aboriginal Rights and Other Rights guaranteed by the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Included are both Treaty Rights and Aboriginal Rights to harvest all manner of fish, mammals, plants, fowl, etc.

It is our Treaty Liberty to continue to use our traditional resources and also explore new resources for the continuation and development of our community in our preferred manner throughout all waters and lands in present day Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, Gaspé, and parts of Maine, and parts of Newfoundland, which encompass the Traditional Ancestral Homelands and Territories of the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, and Passamaquoddy Peoples. The Supreme Court of Canada, in *Simon v. R., 1985*, was clear that Treaty Liberties are subject only to the protection of public safety.

In *Sparrow v. R., 1990*, the Supreme Court, further ruled that for Sect. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* to be construed in a purposive way, that a “generous, liberal interpretation is demanded given that the provision is to affirm Aboriginal Rights”. It is not a black and white matter of paramountcy concerning conservation or Aboriginal fishing rights. In fact, conservation and Aboriginal Rights, together, are paramount to all other rights or privileges. One example given by the Supreme Court was that if a harvest reduction is required to a number of fish which is equal to what is deemed necessary for Aboriginal Peoples to meet their needs, then all of the fish available would go to them. In other words, Aboriginal Peoples have first access and the brunt of conservation must be borne by the other resource users.

Also raised by the Supreme Court in *Sparrow* was that in order to infringe on the Aboriginal fishing right, the Federal Government must first reconcile its federal power with its fiduciary responsibility toward Aboriginal Peoples by foremost requiring the Federal Government to justify the infringement. A valid legislative objective is not enough to justify infringement of an Aboriginal Right.

The Supreme Court ruled that, even though constitutional recognition and affirmation of Aboriginal Rights may give rise to conflict with other interested parties over a limited resource, the first consideration in determining whether a regulation or action is justified must be the “special trust relationship and responsibility of the government vis-à-vis Aboriginal Peoples”.

For more than twenty years, DFO and each of the MAPC partner Native Councils have annually agreed to an arrangement for the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights to fish for food, social, and ceremonial purposes – Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS). Over the years, the Native Councils have reduced FSC salmon fishing efforts, including suspending FSC salmon fishing on inner Bay of Fundy rivers, as proactive measures for salmon conservation. In addition, the NCNS and NBAPC are long-standing members of the iBoF Atlantic Salmon Recovery Team and the NCPEI has been involved in salmon conservation projects with watershed groups. However, there has been no invitation by DFO for the full and effective participation of the Native Councils in broad salmon management, such as the drafting of SFA Integrated Fisheries Management Plans.

We also note that there are many other activities taking place on Gaspé-SGoSL rivers, which are or could be impacting the survival of Atlantic Salmon or the quality/quantity of their habitat, including aquaculture, land management, and stocking programs, with little or no accounting thereof for their end result effects on the salmon populations.

The Supreme Court has been clear that first access is guaranteed to Aboriginal Peoples by Sect. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. It is unconscionable to deny Aboriginal Peoples' access to these rivers and resources where DFO and other government agencies are permitting other activities which cause water pollution, land degradation, the spread of invasive species, habitat loss, and so forth to continue in an ordinary manner, so to speak.

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard. (UNDRIPs, Art. 25)

Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination. (UNDRIPs, Art. 29)

The right to self-determination may be expressed through:

- *Respect for the principle of free, prior and informed consent. This principle implies that there is an absence of coercion, intimidation or manipulation, that consent has been sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities, that respect is shown for time requirements of indigenous consultation/consensus processes and that full and understandable information on the likely impact is provided.*
- *Full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at every stage of any action that may affect them direct or indirectly. The participation of indigenous peoples may be through their traditional authorities or a representative organization. This participation may also take the form of co-management. (UN Dev. Group Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples, 2009)*

Accordingly, it does not matter whether others are using the areas, we, the Aboriginal Peoples, can direct the halting or modification of such activities, if and when we determine them to be detrimental to our lands and resources thereon and therein. In this case, we could require DFO to seek the cancellation of activities on rivers and estuaries of the Maritime Provinces and throughout the Atlantic Ocean which could affect the fitness of Atlantic Salmon or suitability of its habitat, including for the Gaspé-SGoSL DU. The direct and cumulative threats of disease from aquaculture, the destruction of rearing habitat, the pollution of waters, and spread of invasives threaten both the protection of Atlantic Salmon and the protection of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights to those salmon.

For these reasons alone, the infringement of our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in order to secure SARA Listings for the several DUs proposed by COSEWIC is unreasonable, even when a particular proposed SARA Listing would not immediately invoke SARA prohibitions, such is the case for the Gaspé-SGoSL DU. The proposed SARA Listings would impose undue hardships; it is not our preferred way. The Honour of the Crown is at stake to respect and protect our Treaty Liberties, Aboriginal Rights, and international declaration to conserve and utilize these lands and resources.

MAPC has determined that:

- 1. a denial of access to Atlantic Salmon, or other resources in NS/NB/PEI rivers as a result of SARA Listings for several DUs of Atlantic Salmon does impose an unreasonable and undue hardship on the community of Traditional Ancestral Homelands Aboriginal Peoples represented by the MAPC partner Native Councils;***
- 2. an infringement on Aboriginal or Treaty Rights resulting from a SARA Listing for the Gaspé-SGoSL DU cannot be framed or discussed in isolation from the infringements caused by the SARA Listings of the other DUs;***
- 3. the on-going demise of the Atlantic Salmon is caused in part by the mismanagement of wild species over many decades, leading to overall declines of salmon and the other fat fishes vital for our Aboriginal community's food, social, ceremonial, and trade purposes; and***
- 4. it is important for DFO to recognize the significance, to our Aboriginal community and our relationship with DFO, that in the interest of protecting the Atlantic Salmon, our Aboriginal community has itself voluntarily and in discussion with DFO refrained from harvesting Atlantic Salmon in many rivers, particularly the inner Bay of Fundy rivers, while throughout those years our Aboriginal community was recognized to have access and a significant number of Atlantic Salmon from those closed rivers allocated to our Aboriginal community.***

Notwithstanding the above noted, MAPC offers some other initial views, concerns, needs, and interests particular to the proposed SARA Listing of the Gaspé-SGoSL Atlantic Salmon.

III. Integrated Fisheries Management Plans

The *Atlantic Salmon Integrated Fisheries Management Plan 2008-2012 Gulf Region* (IFMP) is deficient to address the concerns or need for conservation of Atlantic Salmon. The five pages of Section 11 “Identifying Current Problems/Issues” are not sufficient to convey the seriousness of the human induced threats, nor suggest or coordinate appropriate remedies. The IFMP states that “the solutions to some of these issues will require a long term and concerted approach that may involve other levels of governments as well as collaboration by various interested parties”, but does not create new mechanisms or processes or elude to how existing mechanism/processes will achieve that, save to say that sub-management unit meetings should annually review the list.

We have not seen evidence of the full and effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples for salmon management and conservation to support the implementation intent stated in the IFMP: *“[The IFMP] is designed to engage the parties interested in the Atlantic salmon and to strengthen their participation towards the better management of the common property resources. This will be done on a provincial basis by reconfirming the Atlantic management unit advisory process and by strengthening the federal, provincial, aboriginal and stakeholders’ collaboration and communication... the concept of sub-management units have been introduced to assist in the orderly management of existing salmon fishing areas throughout the Gulf Region”*.

Nor have we participated in, nor know of, any annual performance reviews, or annual updates to the IFMP required under Section 9.5.

- 5. MAPC requires the full and effective participation of the Native Councils and their regional bodies in the drafting and implementation of subsequent IFMPs for Atlantic Salmon.***

Although the goals, objectives, and principles of the IFMP are well written, the scope of the IFMP, focused on fisheries management, is too narrow to effectively address the multitude of issues and effectively engage the appropriate agencies, organizations, land owners, industry, Aboriginal rights-holders, and other stakeholders.

IV. SARA Management Plan

A SARA Management Plan requires a more detailed treatment of threats, knowledge gaps, and detailed action-oriented plans for protection, management, monitoring, assessment, outreach, communications, and restoration; and thus may be more suited to providing an adequate level of management, particularly management actions which fall outside the scope of DFO’s purview.

COSEWIC, during its assessment of all Atlantic Salmon, for its own purposes, divided the species into 16 DUs, treating SFAs 15, 16, 17, and 18 as one Gaspé-SGoSL DU. However, the SARA Management Plan should not treat the 4 SFAs (comprised of 8 sub-management units and 78 rivers) as one Designatable Unit. To do so would be to “average out” the threats and reality that this DU actually features many endangered or threatened rivers with a few larger, healthier rivers providing the bulk of the reported numbers. For example, COSEWIC noted that the

Mirimichi River population alone provides over 50% of the Atlantic Salmon within the Gaspé-SGoSL DU. Furthermore, there are significant differences between river systems to meet egg deposition conservation requirements, e.g., COSEWIC noted that PEI rivers are largely maintained only by stocking programs.

“The relatively large DU 12 (Gaspé-Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence) reflects this strategy of lumping Conservation Units in the absence of strong data for splitting. The structure for these large DUs may require refinement in the future as more data become available.”
[COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report on the Atlantic Salmon, 2010]

Accordingly, although the proposed SARA Listing by COSEWIC is based on a single Gaspé-SGoSL DU and that SARA requires the Minister to only consider the single DU for the purposes of a proposed SARA Listing, DFO should approach the management of salmon by SFA, SFA sub-management units, or even watersheds, guided by a SARA Management Plan, and with the full and effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples within meaningful management mechanisms.

- 6. If the Gaspé-SGoSL DU should be Listed as Special Concern under SARA, MAPC requires the full and effective participation of the Native Councils and their regional bodies in the drafting and implementation of the SARA Management Plan.***

V. Promoting Positive Incentives and Removing Perverse Incentives

SARA is Canada’s response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD is a far reaching international treaty requiring the reconciliation of need for conservation with the concern for sustainable development, and based in an agreement for fair and equitable sharing of benefits. Central to the development of the CBD is the recognition that,

“We must realize we are not faced with many separate problems, but with different aspects of a single overall problem: the survival and prosperity of all men and women and their harmonious development, physical as well as spiritual, in peace with each other and with nature. And if that is our goal, then surely there is only one road that will lead us there.”
(UN Secretary General Kurt Walheim, 1972)

The IUCN in its widely used *Guide to the Convention on Biological Diversity, 1994* showed that the CBD goes beyond conservation and sustainable use, but has at its core the intent to create a new way forward, recognizing that the “traditional command and control” tools employed by governments fail to adequately address underlying causes which are driving the decline of biodiversity. The CBD requires States to envision and adopt a new system of incentive and disincentive measures as foundational for the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources. Equally important is for States to evaluate all of its current incentives for their impacts on biodiversity and identify perverse incentives, i.e., those incentives which, either intentionally or unintentionally, contributes to the loss of biodiversity.

The most recent Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 summarized:

“The overall message of this Outlook is clear. We can no longer see the continued loss of biodiversity as an issue separate from the core concerns of society: to tackle poverty, to improve the health, prosperity and security of present and future generations, and to deal with climate change.”

“Systematic proofing of policies for their impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services would ensure not only that biodiversity was better protected, but that climate change itself was more effectively addressed.”

“Important incentives for conservation of biodiversity can emerge from systems that ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources.”

[Global Biodiversity Outlook 3, 2010]

- 7. MAPC strongly suggests that the proposed SARA Listings for Atlantic Salmon, including the Gaspé-SGoSL DU, should include an accounting, with the best currently available information, of perverse incentives contributing to the decline of the species, as well as a schedule of studies within their respective recovery strategies or management plans to more fully evaluate perverse incentives.**
- 8. MAPC requests a meeting to discuss incentives for the full and effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples in salmon conservation, particularly in light of recent federal regulatory changes to the Fisheries Act, Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, Canadian Environmental Protection Act, and Navigable Waters Protection Act.**

VI. Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge

In 2008/09 MAPC entered into a verbal agreement, contingent upon a Contribution Agreement drafted by Environment Canada, to conduct an Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) study of Atlantic Salmon in the Maritimes Provinces. The requirement by Environment Canada for Aboriginal Peoples to waive moral rights, as well as numerous other terms and conditions showed great disregard for Aboriginal Peoples ATK and our rights to protect and use our own ATK. To our knowledge, each Aboriginal organization who had initially expressed interest to supply COSEWIC with information about the status of Atlantic Salmon were forced to withdraw, because of Environment Canada’s refusal to accommodate the requirement that ATK be owned and controlled by Aboriginal Peoples, as is their right.

COSEWIC has noted that ATK is one of the largest knowledge gaps for Atlantic Salmon.

Would COSEWIC have lumped together the DU-12 (Gaspé-SGoSL) if ATK had been included? Would COSEWIC have had the “strong data necessary to justify splitting the DU” if ATK were included which shows that salmon return to their natal river systems and that those river systems are markedly different one from another? Would COSEWIC have changed its threat

classification if ATK were included which shows the drastic differences of rivers to meet conservation requirements, on the one extreme the productive Mirimichi and on the other extreme the several dead rivers of PEI?

We think that many experts would agree, that if ATK had been included in the COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report, the DUs and threat classifications would have been attributed somewhat differently, and likely more relevant to the realities on individual watersheds.

9. MAPC would like to revisit, with DFO, the subject of a Salmon ATK Project for the benefit of the next COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report.

VII. Accommodation/Compensation

MAPC reiterates that the Honour of the Crown is at stake to provide for adequate management of Gaspé-SGoSL Atlantic Salmon to ensure an adequate resource for Aboriginal Peoples' current and future needs. The protection and conservation of Atlantic Salmon goes hand-in-hand with the protection and conservation of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights to the salmon.

Our community of Traditional Ancestral Homelands Aboriginal Peoples take conservation and our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights seriously. SARA cannot abrogate or derogate Aboriginal or Treaty Rights, but without salmon, the right is mute.

10. For Aboriginal Peoples, the proposed SARA Listings for the various DUs is a notice to DFO that Aboriginal and Treaty Rights to harvest salmon are being abrogated or derogated. MAPC requires an accommodation, or if no accommodation, then compensation.

Accommodation and compensation for the continued loss of salmon can take many forms. The full and effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples in the development and implementation of an IFMP or SARA Management Plan is one initial area to start for accommodation. Another avenue is additional resources and working commitment from DFO for our Aboriginal community to undertake projects and stewardship for the conservation of a few specific rivers or watersheds for the conservation and sustainable use of Atlantic Salmon. MAPC is interested in moving forward on a Section 11, 12, and/or 13 agreement(s). We view these to lie at the heart of SARA.

VIII. Moving Forward

We are encouraged from the discussion at the table, that DFO desires our full and effective participation as important to advancing the Gaspé-SGoSL Atlantic Salmon proposed SARA Listing. We raised a lot of issues at the meeting and in this letter, which we all recognized will take time, but which can be resolved if the right partners were encouraged and supported.

In addition to the regional discussion, each of the MAPC partner Native Councils have some specific issues, concerns, needs, and interests related to the impacts of the proposed SARA Listing of Gaspé-SGoSL Atlantic Salmon at provincial, SFA, or sub-SFA levels. For example, one issue which remains to be resolved in New Brunswick is the continued denial of access to fishing areas now deemed to be “Crown Lease/Crown Reserve Waters”. An issue which remains to be resolved in PEI is the reality that salmon is Extirpated or Endangered in PEI rivers. An issue in Nova Scotia is that the community has accommodated DFO management for years and now the salmon is Endangered or Threatened in all other rivers, raising the question amongst the community “what next”?

11. MAPC requests that DFO engage the NCNS, NBAPC, and NCPEI to further consult about the proposed SARA Listing of Gaspé-SGoSL Atlantic Salmon.

12. MAPC also requests that DFO continue discussions with us at a regional level concerning the points raised here-in and how DFO will seek the prior informed consent with the full and effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples in salmon conservation and management.

Again, thank-you for a good session. The DFO officials were helpful and shared information about how the proposed SARA Listing would affect salmon management in the Gulf Region, as well as clarifying the intent and extent of an IFMP vs. a SARA Management Plan. The information on Regulatory Impact Analysis Statements (RIAS) was also helpful. We understand that the RIAS is a very short synopsis, but DFO should take special care to fully capture the significance of Atlantic Salmon to our Aboriginal community and the necessity to protect salmon and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. The prior and informed consent with the full and effective participation of Aboriginal Peoples is paramount. We look forward to your response.

Respect for the environment leads to
Knowledgeable and caring decisions,

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With concurrence and agreement by:

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*The Maritime Region Aboriginal Leaders Intergovernmental Council
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