



Jeff AlAO

CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT		
For Information:		
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June 16, 2018

Mayor Barbara Desjardins
Township of Esquimalt
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt BC V9A 3P1

Dear Mayor Barbara Desjardins,

Re: Follow Up from AVICC Mayors' Seafood Round Table

We are so pleased that you could join us for a round table during the recent AVICC meeting. This was a new event for us but one that we will certainly participate in again. Our thanks are due not just to you but to Don McRae for organizing a non-partisan event. We appreciated the chance to talk candidly about the many issues over use of marine resources in BC.

Our worries about the future of commercial fisheries are a result of current federal policies. We support the federal marine conservation targets and we support Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

But by 2020 we will have protected at least 37% of BC's coast using Environment and Climate Change Canada's methodology. We can manage that but we cannot manage much more. There is a human cost to conservation—we have half the fishermen that we had 25 years ago because we harvest less than half as much fish. More no take fishing areas will mean loss of livelihoods with little if any gain for conservation—less fish for BC and the world to buy, fewer jobs in your communities.

Similarly, we draw your attention to Madam Justice Humphries' decision in the recent *Abousaht et al* case where she said DFO cannot represent the interests of other sectors and those interests must be represented but also that voluntary relinquishment of licences (willing buyer/willing seller) is the way to Reconciliation.

If we can leave you with one message: it is that participants in the fishery, whether they be small family businesses or larger companies, are losing the confidence to invest in the future. This includes investment in new vessels, more environmentally friendly gear, new products and new markets and even in the resource itself. This is a result of the federal government's decision to seize almost \$25 million in surf clam quota from one company in Atlantic Canada and give it to another



group without compensation as well as the 2018 BC Central Coast roe herring decision to 'suspend' a scientifically defensible harvest that would have generated \$12 million in revenue in the interest of Reconciliation. We also see indications of other changes to licencing policy on both coasts, including further expropriation.

A commercial fishing licence is not property but for decades there has been a consistent model whereby licences were in effect evergreen—reissued to the same participant every year. Now that model has been compromised and lenders are taking notice. Fishermen and processing companies are finding banks more reluctant to lend, requiring more security or higher rates of interest.

The Clearwater decision was supposedly in the name of Reconciliation. The Central Coast roe herring decision was also supposedly in the name of Reconciliation. No question from us that Reconciliation is a national imperative but as the judge in the recent *Abousabt et al* case said: it is voluntary relinquishment (willing buyer/willing seller) that promotes Reconciliation.

We ask you therefore to raise with your federal colleagues the need for stability, predictability and a clear and fair process for transferring additional access to First Nations (in BC Indigenous people and organizations already control about one-third of licences).

Without this predictability our ability to supply food to Canada and the world and provide jobs and incomes to communities will be severely compromised.

And of course we are always ready to meet to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you again for joining us.

BC SEAFOOD ALLIANCE

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Christina Burridge'.

Christina Burridge
Executive Director