

September 23, 2011

To: All members of the PNCIMA Steering Committee

From: Commercial Fisheries, Conservation, Local Communities, Non-renewable Energy, Recreation and Tourism sectors of the PNCIMA Integrated Oceans Advisory Committee (IOAC)¹

There were mixed feelings around the IOAC table on September 14, 2011 when members were informed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada about the federal decision to reduce the scope and function of the PNCIMA process. Although every sector has engaged in the IOAC with a view to advancing their own interests all have appreciated the importance of collectively working together to advance the interests of the region as a whole with regards to the integration of ocean management. Based on the information we have received to date it is difficult to see how our collective work together, which some feel is what constitutes the “integrity” of the process, will be able to continue.

Effective stakeholder engagement and independent science are the keys to a credible and durable integrated ocean management plan. Over the past fourteen months of meetings we developed trust and although we do not always agree, the importance of an ongoing forum for our sectors to express our views and to learn to understand each other’s needs is imperative. This takes time and capacity. And, because we do not always agree, independent science is also an important component of the PNCIMA planning that allows for increased trust between sectors. The restructured process appears to exclude these elements, which are necessary to truly integrate our planning for the ocean in a cross sectoral way. Many of the stakeholders are now raising questions about whether further participation in this process is warranted.

As stated by Minister Gail Shea on February 1, 2011 in a letter to IOAC members: “Without a strategy to more effectively manage our oceans and address these challenges (failing oceans health, growing user conflicts and industry sector weaker than its potential) there will be continued environmental degradation and reduced employment and economic prospects.” We have invested significant effort in building the components of an ecosystem-based management framework and a planning process that would deliver the necessary elements required by multiple government agencies to live up to their obligations and commitments in the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area. This process is important for ecosystem, economic and community health.

In order to confirm our continued engagement with the PNCIMA process we need to analyze and justify the value of our ongoing involvement to our sectors. To do this we require more information. Below is a list of items that IOAC members require in order to inform their decisions:

¹ The Aquaculture, Marine Transportation, Recreational Fisheries and Renewable Energy sectors chose not to sign this letter.

- The revised issues, outputs and tasks document and related work plans that include a summary of how have they changed relative to the previous process
- The proposed mechanism for credible scientific analysis required for decision-making
- A budgeting strategy that demonstrates the degree to which resources are available to support effective stakeholder engagement, credible science, analysis of key information, and a facilitated process around decision-making for final recommendations
- A renewed commitment to collaborative and consensus-based governance and management processes that include provincial government, first nations and relevant federal agencies
- A strategy for meaningful engagement with communities, stakeholders and first nations regional planning initiatives
- Justification for the current timeline (including a clear statement of DFO's specific deliverables for December 2012) with a strategy for sustained long-term commitment for plan implementation and adaptive management beyond the 2012 deadline.

Due to the time sensitivity of this matter, we request a reply by September 30, 2011. Your response will help us work with our sectors to make a decision about participation in the revised PNCIMA process.

Sincerely,

Jim McIsaac	Commercial fisheries
Lorena Hamer	Commercial fisheries
Kim Wright	Conservation
Jim Abram	Local communities: Strathcona Regional District
Des Nobels	Local communities: Skeena Queen Charlotte Regional District
Al Huddleston	Local communities: Mt Waddington Regional District
Kim Johnson	Non-renewable energy
Nick Heath	Recreation
Evan Loveless	Tourism