



ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
July 9, 10, 11, 2024, Montreal, QC

Resolution no. 20/2024

TITLE: First Nations inclusion in the transformation of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation

SUBJECT: Fisheries, Economic Development

MOVED BY: Chief Dalton Silver, Sumas First Nation, BC

SECONDED BY: Tyler Sack, Proxy, Annapolis Valley First Nation, NS

DECISION Carried by consensus.

WHEREAS:

A. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) states:

- i. Article 25: 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.
- ii. Article 29(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources.
- iii. Article 32(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.
- iv. Article 32 (2): States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.
- v. Article 32(3): States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.

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- B.** The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) passed Resolution 29/2003, *Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation* that noted the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) enacted legislation in 1969, establishing the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) to regulate the marketing and trade of freshwater fish in interprovincial and export markets, effectively devolving federal powers to the Corporation without meaningful consultation with affected First Nations, and northern Aboriginal fishing communities.
- C.** AFN Resolution 29/2003 also noted constraining government legislation, market monopolies, centralized processing, and restricted access to the fishery that severely infringed upon the Aboriginal and Treaty rights of First Nations to make a modest living from the fishery, and in some cases caused significant damage to the size, health, and composition of regional fish resources affecting the ecosystem and all harvesters.
- D.** AFN Resolution 73/2023, *First Nations Rights-based Inland Fisheries Framework* instructed the AFN to hold a meeting on November 21, 2023, at which DFO Senior officials committed to solicit Requests for Information and Proposals for the disposition of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation as a federal asset.
- E.** In the spirit of cooperation and business partnership, Saskatchewan and Manitoba First Nations fishery organizations met at the Dakota Dunes Resort in Whitecap Saskatoon on April 7, 2024, forming an Interprovincial Working Group to coordinate a response to the FFMC “request for proposal” and to reach out to other interested parties in Alberta, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:

- 1.** Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to develop an advocacy strategy to support First Nations inland fishers who are seeking full control of their own commercial fisheries and business models.
- 2.** Direct the AFN to support the National Fisheries Committee and their technicians in monitoring the Interprovincial Working Group comprising Indigenous fishery organizations interested in acquiring the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC).
- 3.** Direct the AFN to monitor the status of the transformation of the FFMC and report back to the National Fisheries Committee annually.

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