



FEB 14 2017

Mr. Eddie Gardner
President
Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance
< singingbear@telus.net >

Dear Mr. Gardner:

Thank you for your correspondence of May 12, 2016, addressed to my predecessor, the Honourable Hunter Tootoo, regarding the appeals of the Federal Court decision in *Alexandra Morton v. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Marine Harvest Canada Inc.* I regret the delay in responding.

As you may be aware, the Crown discontinued its appeal on December 20, 2016, and Marine Harvest Canada Inc. discontinued its appeal on January 11, 2017. As a result of the discontinuance of the appeals, this court case has reached an end.

I assure you that DFO is committed to a robust regulatory landscape for the sustainable use of all our marine resources—including wild and farmed fisheries. Canada's comprehensive regulatory regime for aquaculture is based on the best science available. In fact, to increase our capacity on that front, the Government of Canada's Budget 2016 provided about \$197 million over five years for fisheries science and research. Some of these funds will enable DFO scientists to continue to conduct research to respond to the concerns raised by the Commission of Inquiry into the Decline of Sockeye Salmon in the Fraser River (Cohen Commission), and to support evidence-based decisions to regulate the aquaculture industry.

An update on the implementation of the Cohen Commission's 75 recommendations, as well as future work, was recently published [online](#). DFO has already implemented, in whole or in part, 32 of the recommendations and supports implementation of an additional 22 (for which further work would be required). The remaining 21 recommendations are either out of date or directed toward others (e.g., other federal departments or the Province of British Columbia).

DFO recognizes the importance of Pacific salmon, including Fraser River sockeye, and the value it holds from cultural, social, and economic perspectives. In this context, the Department began consultations in the fall of 2016 on the implementation of *Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Salmon*.

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In closing, as you may be aware, I have tabled the federal government response to the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans' report entitled *An Ocean of Opportunities: Aquaculture in Canada*. A major action includes following this report's recommendation to explore the introduction of a national aquaculture act that would support the orderly expansion of an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable aquaculture industry.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. LeBlanc', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

c.c.: The Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada