



PICFI

*creating sustainable fisheries
with a common vision*

PACIFIC INTEGRATED
COMMERCIAL FISHERIES INITIATIVE

DEMONSTRATION FISHERIES AT A GLANCE

Since 2008, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has supported a number of in-river, demonstration First Nations' commercial salmon fisheries in key areas in British Columbia. These demonstration fisheries provide trial commercial opportunities to First Nations in upstream or terminal areas (in-river locations near the end of the salmon stock's spawning migration), and explore whether economically viable fisheries can take place in areas that have not previously been commercially harvested. Conducting fisheries in terminal areas supports the Wild Salmon Policy objective of safeguarding the genetic diversity of wild Pacific salmon, by reducing fishing pressure on weaker salmon stocks, as these fisheries are more selective than fisheries undertaken in marine areas.



Salmon fishing in Kamloops Lake, 2010.

Photo credit: Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Demonstration fisheries are a key step forward in moving towards integrated commercial fisheries, establishing clearly defined shares in the salmon fishery and building capacity within First Nations communities under the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI). Through PICFI, DFO is seeking to enhance the environmental sustainability and economic viability of commercial fisheries, in a manner that supports conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources, and First Nations' aspirations to be more involved in the commercial fishery.

What is a demonstration fishery?

A demonstration fishery tests or "demonstrates" new methods of fishing such as fishing in new areas or in new ways. This could involve using a new type of gear like fish wheels, or fishing in new locations using more traditional methods such as weirs, seining or gillnetting. For example, the demonstration fisheries in B.C.'s interior are testing the use of selective fishing gear types in commercial fisheries conducted in terminal, in-river locations, away from the marine environment where they have historically occurred. A key objective is to determine if these fisheries are commercially viable in terms of meeting local market demands and managing smaller catches across a broad geographic area. Demonstration fisheries typically occur from early August to late September.



What is the purpose of an in-river salmon demonstration fishery?

In-river demonstration commercial fisheries provide an opportunity for First Nations to participate in the commercial salmon fishery and show how commercial allocations can be transferred up-river from the marine environment. They support the objectives of conserving Pacific salmon and protecting their genetic diversity. By moving the commercial fisheries to in-river, terminal areas, DFO protects weaker salmon stocks by reducing the catch of these fish in the mixed-stock fisheries that occur in marine waters and the lower Fraser River. These demonstration fisheries are also an opportunity for First Nations to explore new fishing techniques in areas where commercial fisheries have not traditionally occurred. The fisheries will provide opportunities for First Nations organizations to sell their products and enter the fresh and processed salmon markets in the interior of B.C. They also act as a building block for First Nations to develop fishing and business capacity, as well as an opportunity for collaboration in the management of fisheries, which will help to inform the business plan development of First Nations as they move forward in the PICFI process toward Commercial Fishing Enterprises.

Licences and Allocation

The pre-season allocations of salmon to demonstration fisheries are determined as a percentage share of allowable catch. Fish for these allocations are made available for up-river fisheries through voluntary licence relinquishment from commercial licence holders in traditional marine waters mixed-stock salmon fisheries. All allocations are based on pre-season run size estimates. However, the actual allocations are determined in-season, based on in-season estimates when the fish actually show up (as is the case for all commercial fisheries). The in-river demonstration fisheries do not increase the total allowable catch in the commercial fishery.

Monitoring and Enforcement

In-river demonstration fisheries are monitored to verify that all fish caught in these fisheries are counted. DFO's Conservation and Protection staff regularly patrol the fishing grounds to ensure that these fisheries are conducted in an orderly manner and that the conditions of the licences under which they are undertaken are adhered to.

Moving forward

Demonstration fishery proposals are generally approved on an annual basis, and are only active during that fishing season. Based on the results of each demonstration fishery, DFO and the participating First Nations will decide whether to continue the program in following years. Eventually PICFI demonstration fisheries could lead towards the development of First Nations commercial fishing enterprises as well as identifying local markets for fresh salmon. As always, all opportunities to fish are dependent on in-season salmon returns. Conservation and the sustainable use of fish stocks are the Department's first priorities in its management of fisheries

About PICFI

PICFI was announced on July 16, 2007, in support of the long-term economic viability of B.C. commercial fisheries and the sustainability of fishery resources. It is a \$175 million, five-year initiative to help develop and implement reforms in support of integrated commercial fisheries. The program is composed of four key elements: access and distribution, capacity building, enhanced accountability, and co-management. To find out more about the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) please visit: www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/picfi.