



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

44th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

EVIDENCE

NUMBER 061

Monday, April 17, 2023

Chair: Mr. Ken McDonald



Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

Monday, April 17, 2023

• (1100)
[English]

The Chair (Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 61 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. This meeting is taking place in a hybrid format, of course, pursuant to the House order of June 23, 2022.

Before we proceed, I would like to make a few comments for the benefit of witnesses and members alike.

Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your mike and please mute yourself when you are not speaking. For interpretation, those on Zoom have the choice at the bottom of their screen of floor, English or French. Those in the room can use the earpiece and select the desired channel. Please address all comments through the chair. Screenshots or taking photos of your screen is not permitted. The proceedings will be made available via the House of Commons website. Finally, as a reminder to all, the use of a House-approved headset is mandatory for remote participation in parliamentary proceedings.

In accordance with the committee's routine motion concerning connection tests for witnesses, I am informing the committee that all witnesses have completed the required connection tests in advance of the meeting.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted on January 18, 2022, the committee is resuming its study of the ecosystem impacts and the management of pinniped populations.

I would like to welcome our first panel of guests.

Representing the Fur Institute of Canada, seals and sealing networks, we have Mr. Chiasson, the executive director, and Madam Vaugeois, the program manager. Representing the Harbour Grace Shrimp Company, we have Mr. Steinar Engeset.

Thank you for taking the time to appear today. You will each have up to five minutes for an opening statement.

I will invite Mr. Engeset to begin, please, for five minutes or less.

Mr. Steinar Engeset (President, Harbour Grace Shrimp Company Limited): Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a pleasure for me to be here today.

Of course, being able to talk to Mr. Chair, by whom I am represented in Harbour Grace, is wonderful.

Saving the seals and, in turn, saving the fish stocks and helping support humankind is very important to me.

The reason I have become very interested in the seals is that they seem to be an exceptionally smart species. Recently, we have seen, on a video camera placed in the shrimp trawl cod end of the factory ships that we operate from Newfoundland into the Arctic, that a seal could dive down more than 500 metres and feed on fish that was being discarded from the Nordmore grates, which is a system we have to discard groundfish. The seal was waiting for fish to come through, and it would take it and feed on it.

It is indicated—and I can't confirm this as the real truth—that seals can stay down for maybe up to 30 minutes due to the oxygen capacity in their blood and body. This is a wonderful natural system that they have developed. How could any living animal dive down as far as that? A human being could never do anything like it. It is probably most likely just seals and whales that are capable of doing these things.

If we could use products created from the complete seal body, we could produce high-value products, and one of those products that is already produced is the long-chain seal oil. Second is something I have been involved in with other scientists from my home country of Norway—heme iron pills, which can help regarding people who have iron deficiencies.

Products of lower value could be food and various other things that can be developed through research and given to countries that need health food options. Of course, clothing has been produced over the years, and in China, for example, they are very good at producing something out of discards, including intestines. Further research on other potential products could be made so that 100% of the seal could be used.

The seals need from 1,200 to 1,500 kilograms of food per year to sustain themselves. Grey seals might need upwards of 3,000 kilograms. That means that there is a lot of food that the ocean has to give them. Based on the number of seals, if they are lacking food, they could end up starving and, in the end, from disease and from other causes due to their bad health, they could disappear.

Our economy of Atlantic Canada will suffer greatly if the fishing industries end up in trouble, as our economy today is also being supported by what we harvest from our oceans. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that proper research is done and a true picture is given on how we can save our oceans.

We are working with a scientist in Norway, Mr. Rune Ulvik, and he has been studying how the heme iron from the seals can be produced in pill form. In the laboratory he is working with, they are also checking whether there are any other heavy metals in the seals that could harm any of the products that could be developed, and how to get rid of the metals for a safe product.

• (1105)

For example, many millions of people around the world need to take iron for their health. Such iron is being produced chemically and the side effects are very painful and people have a hard time using it. The heme iron, for example, from seals has proven that it can be taken without any side effects, and it's very effective as it is from nature.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Engeset.

We've gone a little bit over time on the opening statements, but I believe all members have a copy. Hopefully anything you didn't get to say will come out in the round of questioning.

We have to move on now to the representatives from the Fur Institute of Canada. I don't know if Mr. Chiasson or Ms. Vaugeois wants to start.

Mr. Chiasson is going to give the opening statement.

Go ahead when you're ready, sir, for five minutes or less.

Mr. Doug Chiasson (Executive Director, Seals and Sealing Network, Fur Institute of Canada): Thank you very much.

Good morning, everyone. My name is Doug Chiasson and I'm the executive director of the Fur Institute of Canada. The Fur Institute was created by Canada's wildlife ministers in 1983, and we're the national voice for Canada's fur sector.

The institute is also home to the seals and sealing network, a coalition of sealing-related businesses, governments, indigenous organizations and harvester groups from coast to coast to coast.

I'm joined by my colleague, Romy Vaugeois, who is the program manager for the network.

I'd like to thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank all the members of the committee for inviting us here to share our perspective on this very important study. This study is important to me professionally but also personally as someone who grew up in a rural coastal community on the Gulf of St. Lawrence and on the banks of one of Canada's great Atlantic salmon rivers, the Margaree.

It's no secret that the Canadian seal harvest is currently in a much-reduced state from its heyday. From over 300,000 seals in 2004, in recent years Canadian sealers have harvested less than 30,000 seals each year. Pressure campaigns and weaponized legislatures, influenced by anti-sealing groups, have led to Canadian seal products being banned in previously important markets like the U.S.A., Russia and the European Union.

The seal business has changed significantly since international and Canadian offshore vessels plied Canadian ice and seas for seal skins to supply the fashion houses of Europe. The current offering from Canadian seal harvests is diverse and innovative. There are omega-3 oil supplements for health and athletic performance; gourmet meat preparations; high-end feed, treats and supplements for pets; and, of course, the warm, waterproof, visually striking seal skin garments and accessories we all know and love.

This full utilization not only shows respect to the animal we are taking, but maximizes value for seal harvesters and processors.

Over the last three years, the fur institute has led a national and international branding and marketing campaign for Canadian seal products. CanadianSealProducts.com is a one-stop shop for facts on the Canadian seal harvest and an online shopfront for products from producers across Canada.

• (1110)

[*Translation*]

Over the past 40 years, there has been much discussion about seal populations, which are increasing. As Fisheries and Oceans Canada moves toward ecosystem-based fisheries management, the role of seal predation is becoming increasingly important and must be considered. Ecosystem-based fisheries management cannot be left—

[*English*]

The Chair: Excuse me, Mr. Chiasson. There's no translation taking place.

Can you start again where you started the French and we'll see if we're getting it now, please.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Okay.

Over the past 40 years, there has been much discussion about seal populations, which are increasing. As Fisheries and Oceans Canada moves toward ecosystem-based fisheries management, the role of seal predation is becoming increasingly important and must be considered. Ecosystem-based fisheries management cannot be left as it is and climate change must be taken into account.

[English]

The simple reality is that the federal government must take action to reduce seal populations. DFO's "manage everything upward" approach is failing. Managing near-apex predator populations upward has led to increases in natural mortality throughout the food web, impeding the rebuilding of commercial stocks, damaging culturally and economically important species like salmon and driving at-risk fish populations toward extirpation.

The single most effective tool to control seal populations is a successful commercial harvest. The infrastructure, in both the concrete sense and the human sense, is there right now, but our window to complete this task is rapidly closing. As experienced sealers age out of the workforce, we run the risk of not being able to rise to the challenge of scaling up our harvest to the levels needed to ensure proper management.

What's needed to effect positive change is dedicated leadership at the political and officials level of the federal government. Ministers saying publicly what seals eat helps, but parliamentarians proudly wearing sealskin and instructing the diplomatic core to reduce barriers to entry for seal products into priority markets help a lot more.

For other sectors, investing a portion of their profits into opening a new market is a prudent investment that can lead to long-term growth, but given the restricted scale of the current seal sector, and the significant barriers to entry that we face, developing those markets will require government support. That government investment must be supported by the trade apparatus of the federal government, or it will be like buying a top-of-the-line fly fishing rod but not tying a fly on the end.

Finally, we must continue to bring discussions of sealing and seals outside of quiet corners. Creating an environment where the most significant concerns of fisheries groups, coastal communities, indigenous peoples and the sealing sector can be openly discussed will remove the taboo that has developed over recent decades. Last year's Seal Summit was an important step, but we need a comprehensive follow-up from that summit and to commit to another summit being held this year to continue to move forward together.

Thank you very much for your time. I look forward to your questions.

The Chair: Thank you for that.

We will now go to our first round of questions.

We will start off with Mr. Small, for six minutes or less, please.

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to witnesses for appearing in our very important study here.

I'm going to be sharing my time with Mr. Perkins toward the end of my time.

My question is for Mr. Chiasson. What's the number one impediment to harvesting the current quota of harp seals and hooded seals, in your opinion?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Thank you very much for the question.

The current most significant impediment to harvesting seals is a lack of market access for those products to be sold internationally.

• (1115)

Mr. Clifford Small: In your capacity with the Fur Institute of Canada, can you tell us if there is a market in the U.S. for fur?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: There certainly is a market in the U.S. for fur. The U.S. is a big man on campus when it comes to economic activity. There will always be a market in the U.S. for fur.

Mr. Clifford Small: I'm sure some people find that to be a little bit surprising.

If we could get access to that U.S. market, what would it mean to the harvesting of the current quotas that we have?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I think that access to the U.S. market for any product is game-changing. Certainly, there's work to be done to sensitize American consumers to seal products for the benefits of seal products.

We hear from our members that they get contacted on a very regular basis by Americans who come across their website and would like to buy seal products, but then it has to be explained to them that, sorry, we legally cannot send you these products. We encourage you to get in touch with your congressperson, your governor or your senator to try to ensure that Canadian seal products can be available in the U.S.

Mr. Clifford Small: Mr. Chiasson, which government departments could get involved, and what could they do to help us gain access and maybe make some changes under the Marine Mammal Protection Act to get in there?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: From where we sit, this would require a whole-of-government approach. Just letting this be a DFO problem, continuing to shove it off on DFO and letting it sit in the line department is not a path toward success. We need full engagement from DFO, from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and, particularly, from Global Affairs Canada, the diplomatic corps and the trade commissioners.

Mr. Clifford Small: You mentioned Global Affairs. What's been your experience? Has Global Affairs helped in any way, or has it been more of an impediment to the marketing of our seal products?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I think that there are varying degrees of helpfulness from different levels of Global Affairs. That would be the simplest way to put it. Certainly, there are trade commissioners who are very helpful, and certainly the trade commissioner service in certain countries has been of great assistance. However, having trade in seal products be considered as a core government priority or a core priority of the trade service and a part of our broader diplomatic engagement is something that we have not seen in recent years.

Mr. Clifford Small: Okay.

Let's look domestically here. Would an HST holiday on seal products or some kind of a tax credit help in selling more seal products in Canada? Just answer briefly.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I think it would. However, our bigger issue, certainly, is getting people exposed to the product and taking the taboo out of the product, more so than making the product more affordable.

Mr. Clifford Small: Thank you.

I'll pass it over to Mr. Perkins.

The Chair: Okay. I'll let Mr. Perkins continue for one minute and 50 seconds.

You're like Santa Claus today, Mr. Small, with your time.

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Thanks for the generosity.

Mr. Engeset, my question for you is this: What happens in the ocean when we commercially fish all the large amounts of pelagic fish and other species but do not fish the most prevalent predator, seals?

Mr. Steinar Engeset: What could happen is that the seals would eventually die. Some of the seals, the harp seals, I think, swim up to 15,000 kilometres a year, because they also go up into the Arctic near Greenland and down. To sustain themselves, they need this food. Of course, if there is no food, then they will succumb.

Mr. Rick Perkins: At the time of the cod collapse 31 years ago, there were about 2.6 million harp seals in Newfoundland and a small number of grey seals in Nova Scotia. Today, we have somewhere around eight million harp seals around Newfoundland and somewhere around a half a million grey seals—so many grey seals now that I understand they're actually venturing up into Newfoundland. The department has said as recently as 2021 that they don't eat fish. Now I know the minister said it was a revelation that they do, but the department's supposed scientists said that they don't eat fish.

What's your view? Do they eat fish?

• (1120)

Mr. Steinar Engeset: Yes, they absolutely eat fish. In Nova Scotia on Scatarie Island, there are people who have seen them eating even lobsters, and those would probably be the grey seals. I have personally seen the grey seals on Sable Island. They are huge animals. The thing is that... What I think is so important, Mr. Perkins, is that we show the world that we can help save people's lives. We are not destroying a species of seals if it can take part and we make sure there is plenty for it to be a long-term thing, so that we can

help humankind. Otherwise, we will never be able to have it accepted internationally.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perkins.

We'll go to Mr. Morrissey for six minutes or less, please.

Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is for Mr. Chiasson. You referenced that you advocated for another summit this year. What would be the benchmark, if there was another summit, that would conclude as to its being a successful summit? What would you be looking for at another summit?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I think, honestly, the biggest benchmark for success would be that it shows that the government is making a concerted and comprehensive attempt to help the seal industry and to help the marine management of the northwest Atlantic. You've heard from other witnesses about how there was a forum in 2002 and another forum in 2005, and there was talk of one in 2013 that never happened. We can't let these be one-off conversations. We can't bring everyone together and say, "All right, we solved it; we're all good."

We know there are deeper issues. We know there are more people who could have and should have been in that room. In particular, I will say the fact that the summit did not allow for the participation of a significant number northern participants that were interested in participating, including the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Nunavut as the two recognized bodies for the certification of Canadian seal products in the European Union. They were unable to attend, so there certainly is room to improve.

This is not to say that the first summit wasn't useful. The first summit was incredibly important, but the second one will be more important. The third one will be even more important. I look forward to a day when we don't have to have a seal summit anymore.

Mr. Robert Morrissey: Following up on that, you took us back to 2002 and 2013. I made a couple of notes. Why, after that period of time, are we still here today? What's the single item that governments—plural—have failed on? What decisions did governments fail on such that we're still here talking today about a situation that is reaching a stage where it is having—and the effect will multiply—a devastating impact on east coast ways of life and traditional fisheries that both indigenous people and our commercial fishers depend on?

Over that period of time, everybody in here has talked about the same products—I've been listening to everybody come in—such as oil and using all of the carcass. What has failed over that period of time?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I will say, Mr. Morrissey, that unfortunately I was not in attendance at the summit in 2002. I was 12 years old at the time, which speaks to part of the problem. I think that really ensuring access for Canadian seal products to international markets is a core priority of the trade service and of Global Affairs Canada that we cannot divorce—

Mr. Robert Morrissey: This committee is studying this issue, obviously—DFO, Fisheries—but I agree with you. Fisheries sets the quota. Its sole mandate is to manage the stock. It is not an industrial component of the government. It is not marketing. Could you be clear on what steps government, through its array of departments and expertise, should be prioritizing to establish these markets? Then I will have a follow-up question.

• (1125)

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I will say that the disjointed approach of the federal government—in which we have a market access secretariat at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, in which the trade commissioner service is living at Global Affairs, in which there is now an industrial development section at DFO, without having really any control of the program dollars that were moved from DFO to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada under AgriMarketing—is part of the problem. DFO sets quotas and sets total allowable catches, and it lives largely in a vacuum.

This is not part of the broader conversation around Canadian fish and seafood and Canadian agri-food products writ large.

Mr. Robert Morrissey: You referenced as well how obviously the most successful part is to do a harvest with the full utilization of the animal. Does the east coast fishery have the infrastructure to successfully harvest these animals at sea in the quantities required and get them back to shore in a state that an end-user processor can utilize?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: That's one area on which, certainly I'd defer to the expertise of some of your previous witnesses, particularly Eldred Woodford from the Canadian Sealers Association. Looking towards the human resource issue that we are beginning to face in the sealing sector, we need more professional sealers. In particular we need more professional sealers in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, where the numbers of professional sealers in Nova Scotia and your home province of P.E.I. and New Brunswick pale in comparison to what there were 40 years ago.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Morrissey. There are about 12 seconds left, but hardly time to get in a question or an answer.

We'll now go to Madam Desbiens for six minutes or less.

Go ahead, please.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank the witnesses. What we are hearing this morning is very relevant.

Mr. Chiasson, you were saying earlier that it would be important to engage in respectful commercial hunting, in the human sense. I think we've heard that many times before. That will probably be the best way to develop international acceptability of this niche product.

How do you define a respectful hunt?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: A respectful Canadian seal hunt would be one that is based on our laws, our processes and the three steps that witnesses have spoken about in more detail at other committee

meetings. It would also be a hunt that supports an industry that enables sealers and processors to sell a high quality product.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: So there should be no waste. The sacrifice of the animal's life should be maximized, just as we try to do with normal food-producing animals, as opposed to what we do in slaughterhouses with supply and demand. I understand.

Mr. Engeset, I think you hold an important key to social acceptability, a concept that is ubiquitous internationally, especially in Europe. You are also concerned about what could become a more aggressive hunt, which would challenge the seal's survival. The goal is to preserve the animal's quality of life: if the species is too numerous, the seal will have difficulty feeding itself, which has been well demonstrated. There is also the fact that lives can be saved around the world.

What would you like the government to do to support your analysis and reach internationally?

• (1130)

[*English*]

Mr. Steinar Engeset: I need translation.

The Chair: Steinar, you control the translation on your own computer. Somewhere there you can hit English, French or floor. You should select “English” so that when Madam Desbiens or anyone else is speaking French, you will get it translated into your ear-piece.

Mr. Steinar Engeset: I haven't done that here.

Would she be able to quickly ask me what she asked?

The Chair: I'll ask her. I have her time stopped.

Madam Desbiens, perhaps you could quickly let Mr. Engeset know the gist of your question, please.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: I will try to summarize my question.

Mr. Engeset, in my opinion, you hold an important key to the communication and acceptability of seal products internationally, especially in Europe. You say that the objective is not to exterminate the seal, but to balance its population in order to re-establish the resources and the ecological balance. I think your approach is worthwhile.

What do you need from the government to be able to further convey your thinking?

[*English*]

Mr. Steinar Engeset: Mr. Chair, it didn't come through. I tried to get it in French, but it didn't come through.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Mr. Chair, I would suggest that we send Mr. Engeset the question in English and have him answer us in writing. I really want him to tell me what he needs from the government.

Mr. Chiasson, I'm turning to you again, since I have some time left. You were saying earlier that people from Nunavut were not present at the last event. What was the reason?

[English]

Mr. Doug Chiasson: As I understand it, there were some representatives from the Government of Nunavut.

[Translation]

However, there were no representatives from the Government of the Northwest Territories. This was primarily due to a planning issue, but the Department of Fisheries and Oceans did not provide a hybrid option for participation: either people were there or they were not.

However, there should be more flexibility for people living in rural and remote communities to participate in these events. After all, sealing is not taking place in Montreal, Toronto or Ottawa, but in really remote communities.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: You also said that, in the gulf region particularly, there were not enough hunters and that this expertise was much less widespread.

Not too long ago, we heard from witnesses, namely Mr. Menge and Mr. Komangapik from Reconseal Inuksiuti. They share knowledge, connections and contacts. One of them comes from the Îles-de-la-Madeleine, the other has an indigenous background. You can feel their desire to pass on this knowledge. In your opinion, can we hope that some kind of internship or training will be set up for that purpose?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: In the Îles-de-la-Madeleine, there are certainly many professional hunters. The goal of our current discussions is to see how we could pass on the knowledge of the Îles-de-la-Madeleine or Newfoundland and Labrador hunters to people who would like to become hunters in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick or Prince Edward Island. There are still a few hunters in the maritime provinces, but not enough to have a complete hunt.

• (1135)

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Desbiens.

I will say to Mr. Engeset that the clerk will send him a copy of the question from Madam Desbiens. He can then respond by email in English so we can make that a part of our study as well. Thank you for that.

We'll now go to Ms. Barron for six minutes or less, please.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

My question is for Mr. Chiasson.

My colleague MP Small asked you about the fur market in the U.S. I'm wondering if you can give me just a quick Coles Notes version of the types of fur that are in the market you were talking about between the U.S. and Canada.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: The fur business writ large is a deeply globalized trade. We see product from Canada that moves into the United States that may move elsewhere. We, in fact, see more product move from the United States into Canada at a raw state. There is still somewhat significant fur manufacturing and fur garment

production and sales in the United States. There's also significant participation by Greece, Turkey, China, Hong Kong and, increasingly, South Korea.

There is certainly still an end-user market for fur products in the United States. Unfortunately, in the United States we are beginning to face more and more of the same types of pressure campaigns against all fur, which we've previously seen about only seal products, seeking to ban the sale of fur products writ large.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you. That's interesting. I was wondering if seal was part of this market you're discussing currently.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: It isn't and hasn't been since 1972 with the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The MMPA is fairly bulletproof when it comes to any Canadian seal product moving into the U.S.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Currently, there's no market.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: There's zero market.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Okay. I just wanted to clarify.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: There is demand, but there is no market.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you very much.

You talked about, and I know my colleague Madam Desbiens also spoke about your comment around the need for professional sealers. Can you clarify, just in a few more details, what we would need to do to see that need filled?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Really, what would be required is work that is beginning, I will say, between DFO and harvester organizations in the gulf. The discussion around the harvesting of seals and sea lions in British Columbia would also require some knowledge transfer from commercial harvesters in Newfoundland, Îles de la Madeleine, Nunavut and Northwest Territories. There is the knowledge base out there. We just need to find ways to share that knowledge more completely between different regions.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you.

I'm realizing that I'm not speaking through the chair.

Through the chair, we are seeing a push right now happening. I won't go further down that rabbit hole. It's for a large-scale seal harvest to happen today. I'm just trying to understand your perspective a little bit further on whether we are prepared to do something like this today.

I have a follow-up question to that, if we have time.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I think like any fishery, we can't go from zero to 60 in five seconds or less. This is something that would require a development of human capital and a development of infrastructure to get from where we are at today to even just reaching the total allowable catch for harp seals and grey seals, but it is something that the industry is ready for. If there were a market and money coming in the door to sell seal products, then businesses would reorganize themselves accordingly.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you.

I just want to make sure I get my last question in. Do we have in place currently the capacity for us to move forward with a sustainable seal harvest and utilizing the entire seal? We talked about all the benefits of the seal products.

Do we currently have in place what we need? If not, what do we need to put in place? I know you talked about market. Is there anything else?

• (1140)

Mr. Doug Chiasson: I will say, much like your last question, that if there is demand in the market and if there is a profit motive—I'll put it that way—then sealing businesses, fur businesses, will reorganize themselves accordingly. Really what we need to do is to make sure that it's worth a sealer getting on the boat and heading out and onto the ice to go and take that seal, that it's worth it for a processing plant to process that seal into seal skin, oil and meat, and that it's worth it for the folks who sell those three products to do it. At the end of the day, if we can put money in the pockets of people hunting seals, then people will go and hunt seals. That's not to be blunt about it, but it really isn't as complicated as we sometimes make it out to be.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Barron.

We'll now go to Mr. Arnold for five minutes or less, please.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses.

It's interesting hearing the testimonies today regarding the role of DFO. I looked up quickly what is on DFO's website. One of the opening lines is, “We support economic growth in the marine and fisheries sectors, and innovation in areas such as aquaculture and biotechnology.”

When you look up the definition of “biotechnology” you see that “Biotechnology is the exploitation of biological processes for industrial and other purposes, especially the genetic manipulation of microorganisms for the production of antibiotics, hormones, etc.”

This to me sounds like the work that Mr. Engeset is talking about and could probably be part of DFO's work in promoting fisheries.

Mr. Engeset, would you comment briefly on that?

Possibly, Mr. Chiasson, you could comment after that.

Mr. Steinar Engeset: I would be very pleased to, because I personally feel that, if we're going to succeed with the seals, we can't push the fur industry ahead of it. We have to push and see what the seals can give us that can help humankind. Lots of people are dying. In countries today there are young people who are not developing, because they are lacking iron. I can tell you that you can't get a more healthy product than the heme iron and the seal oil, which is called long-chain.... I think that Canada has a resource that can help those problems in the world. What we're getting attacked on is that we're just taking the fur. That's not to say that I don't love the fur that comes from seals. I have a seal coat, personally.

I encourage you to start to look at all the other products. Don't forget—

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you.

My time is very limited, so perhaps I could get a brief comment from Mr. Chiasson. Then I have another question as well.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Thanks, Mr. Arnold.

I'll actually get my colleague Ms. Vaugeois to speak to this one.

Ms. Romy Vaugeois (Program Manager, Seals and Sealing Network, Fur Institute of Canada): My job is actually to help Canadian businesses promote their products, and there are already so many good products out there.

Heme iron is one. It's a very specific niche market, but there are so many other markets that are covered right now. For example, with the seal oil, like Mr. Engeset said, we're currently doing rheumatoid arthritis research. It's good for your heart. It's good for the joints of both pets and humans. These are two totally different markets. For the meat, like for crabs, there are the restaurants, the pet food and the feed. There are different uses that we can do and the products already exist.

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you.

Further for Mr. Chiasson, you spoke briefly about the management of all species except predators and so on.

Could you elaborate a little further on what you've seen in your work experience? I know you've worked for different organizations mostly on the environmental side and dealing with environmental issues. Could you elaborate further on what you see as the impacts of managing all species, including humans, except for apex predators in the system?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Thank you, Mr. Arnold.

Before joining the institute, I spent five years working for a large international conservation organization focusing on fisheries issues. The global conversation around ecosystem management of fisheries and whatever that means is certainly an ongoing one. However, something that we see very clearly is the need to consider predation within DFO's population models.

We're seeing right now, in the northwest Atlantic, the beginnings of a collapse of primary production. We're seeing the collapse of primary production. Pairing that with significant increases in natural mortality, which we're seeing across a number of species, particularly groundfish, if there's not enough energy going into the system and there's too much of the system going into seals, then it is fairly straightforward to see that there will be an impact across the system.

It's not that we need to put seal predation on a pedestal above everything else in the model, but we need to be honest with ourselves. We need to be honest in the management of our fisheries, not only in commercial fisheries but also in the management of at-risk species, that these increases in natural mortality that have occurred across a number of populations through the 1990s and early 2000s, which are largely unexplained right now, do have a fairly straightforward explanation. We need to be very cognizant of additive mortality above that natural mortality if that natural mortality is itself increasing.

• (1145)

Mr. Mel Arnold: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Arnold.

We'll now go to Mr. Kelloway for five minutes or less, please.

Mr. Mike Kelloway (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's great to have the witnesses here. It's been very educational for me to hear all the witness testimony today and previous testimony in relation to seals.

There are a lot of themes. There are a lot of themes that have emerged already in terms of lack of market access and why that is, lack of infrastructure and why that is.

Through the chair, Mr. Chiasson, you talked about the importance of not having one-and-done meetings. I couldn't agree more with you in terms of this. We've had the Atlantic task force on seals. We've had the summit.

We had the minister, who did say at a press conference in Newfoundland, surrounded by fishers, that seals eat fish. Now, why did she say that? Let's unpack that. We can smile and we can snicker, and we can have a good time at that. The message was to the fishers, yes, but the message was to the rest of the world. She was asked to make that statement. It may be funny for some, but it was very profound for those who were there, and maybe potential markets.

I want to go back to education for a second because you talked about it. You talked about your efforts, and Ms. Vaugeois, your efforts as well, in terms of educating. It seems to me that part of this is reframing—considerably quickly, too, by the way, we need to do this—the narrative in terms of the importance of seals from an ecosystem perspective and that they're eating fish, yes, but also for what they provide.

For example, I go back to education. Last year I attended a seal event here that was put on by Gudie Hutchings and Yvonne Jones. They had different types of products. I picked up a product. I picked up seal pills. I was told that these would help with rheumatoid arthritis. I can tell you that over the past year I think the seal pills I'm taking are having a really interesting, positive impact on it. The gentleman also told me that I would look younger. That hasn't really worked out all that much.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mike Kelloway: In this job I'm progressively getting older.

To both of you, in terms of the impacts it has, the benefits, we need to reframe this. We need to reframe it nationally, by the way, and I would even say regionally, nationally and internationally.

I'm looking to you to give us some ideas of what you're doing, but also how we can work together on reframing that from a national and international perspective, in particular with the Americans. If we do go offside in one form or another...and I don't think anybody here is saying we need a cull. I don't think anybody's saying that. I wouldn't want to put words in anyone's mouth here. We need to be careful. We need to be tactical and we need to be strategic. One false move could impact an entire fishery, or two, or three, or all of them. How can we work together on the education piece?

• (1150)

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Thank you for the question.

I think that, like you say, this is really around reframing the conversation. We have seen witnesses appear at this committee representing large fisheries organizations who I'm sure would not have accepted the invitation if this study had been held 10 years ago, because there was a time when it was impossible to have these conversations. The conversation itself was the kind of thing that might get the Americans' backs up.

Certainly, as somebody who grew up in a town with plenty of lobster and crab fishermen—my cousin is a crab fisherman—I don't want to see anything happen that will hurt market access for all Canadian fish and seafood products, but seal is a Canadian seafood product. We need to be a part of broader conversations that involve fish and seafood. Maybe we aren't the focal point of every conversation and certainly, looking towards the Americans, CBSA doesn't stop the grey seals from Sable Island at the border. Those grey seals are swimming into Maine waters, New Hampshire waters and Massachusetts waters. They are seeing impacts from predation by grey seals that come from Canada. There absolutely is a large constituency within the U.S. that would ask why they are blocking the Canadians from doing this.

There are the follow-on impacts in other markets that we see. We go and speak to other countries halfway around the world, and they say that they don't want to put themselves in a situation where the Americans might take a harder look at what we're doing and accidentally run afoul of what's now a 50-year-old piece of legislation—the MMPA—which is not particularly nuanced.

That's the unsolvable question, I would say, of the seal industry. How do we find a way to make the Americans, at the very least, clearly say what they take issue with and what they don't? The Americans do allow for the killing of seals and sea lions under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. They are doing it right now, funded by the state of Idaho and certain northwestern states. They're removing sea lions and seals that are predated on salmon and steelhead trout. How do we talk to the Americans and say that they're doing this much, so we're going to do this much, that this is what we're going to do, and we're going to manage our fishery the same way they're managing their fishery? For far too long, that has been a third rail. That conversation can never and will never be brought up with the Americans.

I think the relationship between Canada and the United States is strong enough that, at the very least, we can have an honest high-level conversation. We can't send some director general from DFO—no offence to the director generals at DFO—to Washington to have this conversation. This conversation needs to be had by the minister—and not only the Minister of Fisheries, but the Minister of International Trade and the Minister of Foreign Affairs—to impress upon the Americans the reality we're facing.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Kelloway.

We'll now go to Madam Desbiens for two and a half minutes or less, please.

[Translation]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Chiasson, not long ago, the leader of the Bloc Québécois, Yves-François Blanchet, and I went to the Rendezvous loup-marin in the Îles-de-la-Madeleine. We were told a lot about the sort of reserve that exists in relation to anything that looks like a development, education or awareness initiative.

We were told that it may, therefore, be in our interest, in Quebec and in Canada, to develop museums. For example, Exploramers wants to set up a seal and seal hunting interpretation centre that would inform people of the seal's potential. This subject sometimes gets bad press. We could start by creating ambassadors internally, as there are skeptics even in our own backyard.

Do you think an initiative like Exploramers's could be expanded across Canada?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Absolutely. I'll yield the floor to Ms. Vaugeois to talk more about industry ambassadors.

Ms. Romy Vaugeois: We're already doing that. We just finished the Canadian fish and seafood opportunities fund program, for which we received \$2.94 million. We've been doing influencer campaigns with vignettes on seals and fur, both for indigenous and non-indigenous products. We did a lot of online advertising, because it was during the pandemic. It generated 68 million impressions. We focused on Quebec and Ontario because that's all the budget allowed.

Certainly, we can reach more people online compared with initiatives that target people passing through Gaspé, for example.

• (1155)

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: I don't know if you're familiar with the museum: it already provides training. It's a promising model, so it could be leveraged more or stimulated with more investment. The outfitters model is interesting, as well, since it educates people, gives them access to this hunt and demystifies it a bit.

Do you think this is an approach that could be developed further?

Ms. Romy Vaugeois: Yes. Anything related to advertising is so broad. It's about reaching as many people as possible and making sport hunting more accessible.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: This could consequently help develop enthusiasts, people who will really take a liking to it, as to ordinary hunting.

Ms. Romy Vaugeois: The heart of the market is Montreal and Toronto, whose populations are so far from the ocean. There is also a lot of work to be done in parallel to educate these people, as we said earlier. People who want to become hunters are already open to the idea of consuming the products.

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: They need places like Exploramers and outfitters to give them more access, with people—

[English]

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Desbiens. We've gone a little bit over.

We'll now go to Ms. Barron for two and half minutes or less please.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you, Chair.

I will continue on with my questions from before, Mr. Chiasson.

My question is around what you have rightfully brought up on the importance of having territories and provinces across Canada being involved in the Seal Summit and in this conversation. I'm wondering if you could provide your perspective on the importance of having region-specific plans in place on how to best move forward when it comes to pinniped harvesting.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Certainly on the issues faced in different regions, even as simple as there are different species involved in different regions, we need to ensure that the management of these species is second to none. We certainly face enough issues with the international reception of our seal harvest. If we were no longer able to say this hunt is sustainable that would be difficult. Managing the bearded seal harvest in Nunavut would be very different from managing the sea lion harvest in British Columbia, and very different from managing the harp seal harvest on the Front in Newfoundland. We need certain national benchmarks for these things, but certainly we need to be able to also ensure that local realities are reflected.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you.

You also mentioned the Americans were removing seals and sea lions. Do you have any further information around that?

I think we can always learn from other countries, so if you can expand on that, it would be great.

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Absolutely.

There are a few ongoing projects for removal of seals and sea lions in particular localities in the United States where there are already impediments to salmon and steelhead migration. They're often around hydro dams. What they see quite often is that you'll get to a point where a lot of fish are holding at the bottom of a hydro dam and all of a sudden a sea lion shows up. That sea lion will set up shop in that vicinity for as long as they see fit. They will then go in and remove seals or sea lions that are within certain areas, particularly around hydro dams but there are other places.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Can I just clarify what you mean by remove?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: Lethally remove—they will kill them.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Do they use the entire seal?

Mr. Doug Chiasson: No. To my understanding, they do not use the seal at all.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Barron.

That concludes our first hour. I want to say a big thank you to Mr. Chiasson, Madam Vaugeois and Mr. Steinar Engeset, for their participation here today and the knowledge that they've shared with the committee.

We'll take a very short recess as we change out now to our second hour of testimony by witnesses and questions.

The meeting is suspended.

• (1155) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1200)

The Chair: We're back.

I'd like to make a few comments for the benefit of the new witnesses.

Please wait until I recognize you by name before speaking. For those participating by video conference, click on the microphone icon to activate your mike and please mute yourself when you are not speaking. For interpretation, for those on Zoom you have the choice at the bottom of your screen of floor, English or French. For those in the room, of course, there aren't any of those at this particular time. All comments should be addressed through the chair.

Finally, I will remind you that the use of a House-approved headset is mandatory for all virtual participants in parliamentary proceedings.

I'd now like to welcome our witnesses for our second hour.

We have Ms. Aaju Peter, lawyer. Representing the Canadian Centre for Fisheries Innovation, we have—of course no stranger to me—Mr. Keith Hutchings, managing director and former member of the provincial legislature and a minister at times as well. Representing the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador, we have Craig Pardy. He's a member, of course, as I just said, in the provincial legislature for the district of Bonavista.

Thank you for taking the time to appear today. You each have up to five minutes for an opening statement.

We'll go to Ms. Peter first, please, for five minutes or less.

Ms. Aaju Peter (Lawyer, As an Individual): Mr. Chair and members of the committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you today.

My name is Aaju Peter. I was born in Greenland. I went to school in Denmark. I have lived in Iqaluit, Nunavut, since 1981. My ancestors, the Inuit, are the founding people of the circumpolar Arctic, and we are the sole remaining hunting culture in North America.

For more than 5,000 years, sealing has been central to almost every aspect of Inuit life in the Arctic. Inuit hunters still follow the ancient practice of sharing their catch with their families and communities. Because the seal meat is not sold but shared, the hunters depend on their ability to sell the sealskins so that they can keep feeding their families and communities. However, the seal bans in 1983 and 2009 have caused undue hardship and increasing food insecurity in Arctic Canada.

With the EU seal ban, Inuit bear the administrative and financial burden of proving that the hunt and product meet EU criteria. The sale of seal products has not recovered from 2009, mainly due to public perception in Europe that all seal products are illegal and immoral. The role that various Canadian governments, over decades, have played in poorly contesting the growth of the animal rights corporations—based largely in the United States—has resulted in great hardship throughout Canada, but no more than in the Inuit communities. The Inuit communities have been affected gravely.

Food security and high cost of living are both impacted by the EU seal ban. The ban has reduced incomes and reduced local seal meat availability. Everywhere you look in our society, the EU seal ban has had a huge negative impact. As the price for sealskins dropped by 90%, the population of the various seal species has exploded in our waters—over 10 million plus in total—and will have a serious impact on the balance of nature in the ecosystem. An overpopulation is not a healthy population—on the contrary.

To add insult to injury, the WTO states that this ban is acceptable because it protects the morals of European citizens. What they're saying is that our legitimate right to live our culture negatively affects the morals of EU citizens. Their colonial mentality is evident in the so-called exemption for products from Inuit, an extension that exists only if Inuit can prove to them that our products meet their criteria of who is an Inuk, what traditional hunting is and a bunch of other patronizing rules and regulations.

Sadly, it has to be said that for decades, Canada, in its feeble attempts to deal with the sealing issue, has failed to recognize the unique identity of the Inuit community and how the EU bans impacted negatively on the Inuit to a far greater degree than other Canadian communities.

I applaud the fact that the government is tackling the issue of ocean ecosystem management, as it is urgently needed for all of our sakes. However, I would applaud much louder if the Government of Canada would actively and forcefully tackle the stigma placed on the Inuit by the EU and the WTO with the bans they have put in place, and how their rules and regulations are demeaning to our communities.

The dignity of the Inuit demands that the Government of Canada must seriously focus to end these bans that defame the Inuit communities and, for that matter, other Canadian communities.

Thank you for your time and attention.

• (1205)

The Chair: Thank you. That was perfect timing.

Ms. Aaju Peter: I hit the five-minute mark.

The Chair: Yes, it was dead on. Thank you.

We will now go to Mr. Hutchings, for five minutes or less, please.

Mr. Keith Hutchings (Managing Director, Canadian Centre for Fisheries Innovation): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present on the study. I certainly want to recognize the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans and the work you're doing. I look forward to your final report and recommendations.

I'm the managing director of the Canadian Centre for Fisheries Innovation, which is a separate incorporated entity of Memorial University in Newfoundland and Labrador, with a mandate driven by an industry-led board of directors representing harvesters, processing and the aquaculture industry. The centre is a conduit between the fishing industries, academia, science and research institutions, and companies that support the industry. We are an enabler organization leading applied research, innovation and technology in the Canadian seafood sector.

CCFI responds to R and D needs in the harvesting, processing and aquaculture sectors by developing and leading projects, big and small, and transitioning quickly to meet emerging opportunities or challenges. It demonstrates leadership in equity and diversity, and it fosters understanding and a shared approach with indigenous peoples and their communities. Finally, CCFI supports sustainable fisheries and enables industry adaptation to climate change.

Your study of the ecosystem impacts and the management of pinniped populations is needed more than ever in light of the growing abundance of pinnipeds, especially harp, grey and harbour seals. I would suggest the understanding of the correlation—the cause and effect relationships—between the pinniped predation on various fish species and the effect on commercially harvested species and other species in decline is gravely lacking in science and thus in the public discourse.

From a Canadian perspective, I think we need to ask if we are willing to take on the investment and commitment to truly collect the data needed, and the research and science, to achieve the understanding required to allow resource management reflective of those findings. We are facing an unprecedented ecosystem predation issue related to the overpopulation, the amount of fish being consumed and the effect on the ecosystem.

I think your motion speaks well to the topics that need attention, such as ecosystem impacts of pinniped overpopulation. We need multi-year, multispecies spatial and migratory research. Short-term ad hoc stomach content research is not adequate. So many variables are not being considered, such as migratory patterns, changes in

water temperature and even the effects on predated fish species and other species that are available for predation.

On domestic and international marketing potential, as an example, Canada consumes very little seal as a food source, but we try to convince the world to continue or to begin that consumption. We need to invest in the research on meat preparation, diet and the nutritional value of meat and other attributes; in the expansion as a food source in international markets; and, as we have said, in full utilization in any harvest.

We need active management—real-time management with long-term supported research coordinated with industry, science and supportive organizations that have no stake or bias, other than to facilitate research and data and communicate findings for use in resource management.

On being socially acceptable, we need to view this industry a little differently now. Regarding the medical and pharmaceutical attributes of seal, the natural ingredients, the new generation views as key to a healthy lifestyle natural occurrences in nature, which fits perfectly with a renewed view of the attributes of this industry.

I'll also quickly reference the Atlantic seal task force report. It talked about many similar aspects related to seal diet, distribution and migration patterns, a better understanding of the relationship between seals and commercial fish stocks, and how all of us need to work collaboratively and seek out other science from other nations as well.

There were four points identified that are quite relevant: seal diet, distribution, relationships I've talked about and working collaboratively with all industry partners.

I would conclude by stating that everyone must be engaged in the research process going forward, supported by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and used to make resource management decisions reflective of the significant predation occurring in the overall ecosystem and how it is linked. We need to rethink how we collect data and science to support the work of DFO. We certainly collectively need a commitment to act.

I thank you for the opportunity to present to you today and to share some thoughts with your committee. I look forward to any questions you may have as we move forward.

Thank you, Chair, very much.

• (1210)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Hutchings.

We'll now go to Mr. Pardy for five minutes or less, please.

Mr. Craig Pardy (Member, District of Bonavista, House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador): Thank you for the opportunity, Chairman McDonald and the committee, to address you today. It was good to see you, Mr. Chair, in the House of Assembly the week before last.

Today, I would like to make three points.

First, let me begin where I must, which is by discussing the issue of jurisdiction. For centuries, Newfoundland and Labrador had one of the most important fisheries in the world. Evidence was provided by Sir Albert J. Walsh's "Report of the Newfoundland Fisheries Development Committee" in 1953, which was a joint study between the Government of Canada and the then Government of Newfoundland.

A line was drawn in the sand prior to our entry into Confederation, which placed jurisdiction for fisheries and oceans with the federal government rather than provincial governments. No exception was made for our province with respect to the vast ocean territory and fisheries that we as a country had brought with us into Canada. No other province in Canada lacks jurisdiction over its most important resource industry.

In the mid-eighties, the Government of Canada chose to make a partial exception for our province by agreeing to the Atlantic Accord, which treats subsea oil and gas resources around Newfoundland and Labrador differently. This allowed our province and Ottawa to manage the resources jointly under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board.

We have long called for a similar arrangement with respect to fisheries management to give our province a seat at the decision-making table and a direct say in the running of our most important industry. For years, we have been told it cannot be done, but of course it can be done, as the Atlantic Accord proved. You are the ones in a position to facilitate it, so I urge you to recommend that joint fisheries management for Newfoundland and Labrador become a priority. We have no illusions that it would be a panacea for the challenges we face. Indeed, it would bring new challenges. Regardless, it would be far better to be at the table making decisions than to be making presentations to those who hold all the power.

Second, regarding pinnipeds, forgive me if I simply call these predators "seals", as most people do. Seal predation is an issue for many fishing jurisdictions around the world, including our own. How great is the problem? It depends on who you ask. If you ask fish harvesters and seal harvesters, who have witnessed the large number of seals around our coasts and up into our rivers and who have seen the content of the stomachs or the partially eaten carcasses of fish, seal predation is an enormous problem. If you ask fisheries scientists, you might or might not get the same answer. Why is that? The vast wild ocean is not a controlled laboratory environment.

Harvesters are of one voice when they tell us that there are still too many seals consuming too many fish and altering the ecosystem. The level of predation is making any prospect of fish stock rebuilding impossible. There must be a program for removals. Anything less is an abdication of responsibility.

The last thing I'd like to address is closely related to the first two. That's the issue of the severe overpopulation of seals. Whether it's harp seals off the northeast coast, grey seals in the Gulf of St. Lawrence or the numerous other species of pinnipeds that populate our open water, our coastlines and, yes, our rivers, if nothing is done to reduce the overpopulation, we can say goodbye to ever rebuilding our cod stocks and maintaining the balance of our pelagic species like capelin, herring and mackerel. Predation of salmon by seals of various species in the estuaries and rivers throughout the east coast is an equally critical issue and likely an important issue along the coast of British Columbia as well.

Glenn Blackwood, the co-chair of the most recent report of the Atlantic seal science task team, reported at the federal Seal Summit in St. John's, Newfoundland, on November 8 and 9, which you, Mr. Chair, attended. The report estimated that total harp seal consumption in 2J3KL, which stretches from Labrador down to the Avalon Peninsula, "during 2014 was estimated to be approximately 3.2 million metric tons.... The same year, all commercial landings in Newfoundland and Labrador totalled 265,000 metric tons." That's 12 times more than our commercial fishery, which is valued at \$1.3 billion.

Mr. Blackwood said, in responding to a question, that the science on seal diets is woefully inadequate.

• (1215)

Ed Martin, an attendee at the Seal Summit, asked the chair of the seal task team, Glenn Blackwood, "Seals are having a devastating effect on our ecosystem. Isn't the harvest of seals essential and no longer a consideration?" The chair's answer was, "Agreed".

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans prides itself on two primary strategies for fisheries management: the precautionary approach and the ecosystem approach. We are in the position we are right now, with regard to seals, because DFO ignored those two approaches for responsible fisheries management. That is their very own policy, and now their very own failure.

The bottom line on seals when it comes to the jurisdictional boundary is this. As long as there is nothing done to bring the seal population back into balance, the minister and the department are using only the "hope and prayer" approach.

Since 1949 the responsibility has rested squarely on the desk of the federal government. The absence of action is an action in itself. The absence of action is an abdication of the federal government's duty. Removing seals from the ecosystem must be done. You can count all the seals you want, but counting does not remove them.

I look forward to doing my best to answer questions you may have.

Thank you very much.

• (1220)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Pardy.

We'll get right to those questions now.

We'll go to Mr. Small for six minutes or less.

Go ahead, please.

Mr. Clifford Small: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for joining us in the second half here.

Twenty-five years ago, Canada was the top fish and seafood producer in the world. Now we rank number eight. The goal under the blue economy is to double our seafood production and to get up to being the number three producer in the world by 2040. Only 50% of the seafood produced in the world is wild-sourced.

I'd like to ask Mr. Hutchings this: Is it possible for us to achieve any of the goals under the blue economy and grow our wild production with the pinniped predation that we have right now?

Mr. Keith Hutchings: Thanks for the question.

I think, within the context of what you're describing, the answer is no if the current pattern continues. We have an ecosystem. We have tremendous predation. We need to isolate that predation and talk about how we relieve some of that pressure on both species we're harvesting today and species we want to harvest in the future.

Mr. Clifford Small: Your organization is involved in product development and whatnot. Do you think, if they are marketed to the world properly, we have a slate of products ready to go right now so we can undertake full utilization and bring the seal population down to where it needs to be?

Mr. Keith Hutchings: I think there are many entrepreneurs and businesses out there that have done tremendous work. They have invested in their own research to develop those projects. I think a lot more needs to be done. If we're looking at full utilization of a seal and how we market that and the uniqueness, maybe, of the meat content and other attributes, there's a lot of work to be done.

As I think one of the previous presenters talked about, going from zero to 60 immediately has its challenges. That's where there needs to be investment.

Mr. Clifford Small: Thank you, Mr. Hutchings.

Can I have your thoughts on that, Mr. Pardy?

Mr. Craig Pardy: Yes. I totally concur with Mr. Hutchings. I think the data speaks for itself, MP Small.

When we look at 2J3KL and know that 3.2 million metric tons of fish is consumed by the seals and that we harvest 250,000 metric tons, that's 12 times that much. If you really want to double our food production by 2040, then we're really going to have to look at who is harvesting and taking the fish and the resources out of our waters and our ecosystems.

I would think that the previous seal task team would have stated that it's clearly predation that's taking the vast product out of our system, and I say that in Newfoundland and Labrador, where we have a significant number or percentage of our homes that would be food-insecure homes, as we speak today.

Mr. Clifford Small: Mr. Pardy, from your perspective as a member of the House of Assembly, how do you think that the policies of the provincial government in terms of no new tanneries.... There's

one tannery in Newfoundland and Labrador. Processors can't ship out untanned skins. Do you think that's right?

We're not increasing opportunity if we can't let some sort of capitalism take place in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Do you know of any circumstances this past winter whereby harvesters and potential processors tried to open, maybe, a new processing facility and were basically stonewalled?

• (1225)

Mr. Craig Pardy: MP Small, we certainly need to look into that and do our part in making sure that we fully utilize and create an industry where we can take the seals and utilize them.

One of your previous speakers in the first hour mentioned that, if we create the industry and we create the markets for this product, you're going to find that industry will be jumping on board in order to harvest and to get involved in the sealing industry.

That is something provincial. We have a lot of work to do provincially, but I would think that there's been a malaise. Other than studies that we've seen over the last number of decades, there's been a malaise in the sealing predation issue. We seem to be going from one study to another. All the time, we see the growth in our sealing population, whether it be the grey seals or the harp seals.

Mr. Clifford Small: Thank you.

To Ms. Peter, on the federal government's response to the decline in Inuit markets in the EU, how does that fit with reconciliation for Inuit peoples?

Ms. Aaju Peter: Reconciliation is reconcili-action. You have to have action. We need to see a lot more action from the federal department, which is the only body that can speak on this issue because, as a territory, we don't have the power. We would like to keep the dialogue open as part of reconciling what has been before.

I concur with the predation, and I concur with taking the overpopulation of the seals. In my opinion, if we could give, let's say, a million seals to be shared among the 26 Inuit communities where you've taken the seals and then develop them for our market, that will be part of reconstituting, reinstating and regiving some of the money that has already been lost.

Mr. Clifford Small: Thank you, Ms. Peter.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Small. You've gone a good bit over, but I'll pick that up from you somewhere along the way.

We'll now go to Mr. Hanley for six minutes or less, please.

Mr. Brendan Hanley (Yukon, Lib.): Thank you very much to all the witnesses.

I want to continue on the same line of questioning.

Ms. Peter, I'm a fellow northerner, although from the western side of the Arctic. I'm from Yukon territory.

I'm really interested in the relationship that you point out between overseas markets, particularly the EU, and local food security. I think this is really important to flesh out, identify and document.

I wonder if you could clarify. Given that you talked about hunting seals as a major part of Inuit lifestyle for thousands of years, can you clarify the relationship between market access to EU and the effect on local harvesting and distribution of seals for Inuit in Nunavut?

Ms. Aaju Peter: Mr. Hanley, thank you for that question. Since we started travelling to Europe—first to Holland in 2007—we already knew as sealers that it was not just about Inuit sealing and it wasn't just about Atlantic sealing. It was the image being showcased. That was the image being shown on television and in ads to create money and funds for the organizations.

That image cost our economy. People couldn't tell in Europe whether a seal was hunted from other places or whether it was hunted by Inuit.

Our approach has always been that in Canada we have to be united. We have to have one face where we say that, whether the seal is caught here or there, we are all sealers, and the bad taste and image affects us all, which is what happened and is still going on to this day. Inuit hunters and Inuit communities depend on all the work that has been done and that is being done by commercial sealers. We are one family.

• (1230)

Mr. Brendan Hanley: I noted also that you're applauding the idea of ecosystem management of the ocean, but you also noted, of course, the exploding population of seals in the north. Can you elaborate on this? How much is based on local science and local observation? Is Inuit traditional knowledge contributing to that assessment of the exploding seal population? Furthermore, is the TK aspect being recognized enough? Is Inuit on-the-ground assessment being incorporated into Canada's assessment of seal populations?

Ms. Aaju Peter: I will answer your last question first, but I don't know what "TK assessment" is.

Mr. Brendan Hanley: I mean traditional knowledge as part of assessing, assuming that is part of your assessment of seal overpopulation.

Ms. Aaju Peter: I understand that under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the federal minister has to take into consideration the knowledge and input from the communities in assessing anything to do with oceans and waters and management of seals, for instance. I'm not part of that, because I'm not employed by and I'm not part of the hunters and trappers organizations that would give their input.

What I do know is that a traditional Inuit saying is that an overpopulation is not a healthy population. When the animal rights groups went out to save the seals, they thought that if we didn't kill or harvest the seals, that would be a good thing. But as we are seeing now, in 2023, we have an overpopulation, and we know that is not good for us.

Over the years since 1981, when we would go sailing down Fro-bisher Bay—a 250-kilometre-long bay—we used to be able to see

maybe harp seals here and there, a very minor herd. Today, the minute you go out in the bay and try to sail over, you have herds and pods of harp seals all over the place.

As we have heard, the ringed seals that we depend on for our food are intimidated. They travel singularly, and a herd of harp seals is vicious, so it makes it even harder for us to harvest our food.

Mr. Brendan Hanley: Thank you.

I have a little bit of time, I think.

The Chair: You have 40 seconds.

Mr. Brendan Hanley: There are 40 seconds for Mr. Hutchings. One of your recommendations involved our needing to be much better at data collection. I wonder if you could be a little bit more specific on what kinds of data we need that we don't currently have and how we should approach that.

Mr. Keith Hutchings: Thank you very much.

I guess one of the issues we've heard from industry, and continue to hear, is the actual time period in collection of data.

An example would be the extraction of the stomach for the evaluation of stomach content in terms of what the predation habits are of a particular seal, whether harp or grey seal. Oftentimes now that's done between January and April. It's a restricted period of a point in time in a migratory pattern or a location or an interaction between a predator and a species.

There's no long-term evaluation, say, on an annual basis. A harp seal will migrate north. What's it eating off the Front, what's it eating in the Arctic and what does that full diet in the predation description look like over an annual period? That type of work comparatively over multiple years is not being completed. I guess that's what I'm referring to.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Hanley.

We'll now go to Madam Desbiens for six minutes or less, please.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank the witnesses, who are always very interesting and relevant.

Mr. Hutchings, the demand is already greater than the supply in Quebec right now. There are 200 restaurants waiting to add seal meat to their menu. The Metro chain also wants to offer seal meat in a number of its stores. In Quebec, there is really a lot of momentum around this meat.

You were saying earlier that your centre is a facilitating organization. What role could you play in balancing supply and demand in Quebec?

• (1235)

[*English*]

Mr. Keith Hutchings: Thank you very much.

I think you've isolated an item there in terms of...and I think we saw some of this in the Seal Summit with regard to bringing groups together in the various dialogues and in what was discussed in terms of some regions of the country. There may be a market and availability for product, but maybe it's not known and maybe the ability to get it to that market is not known.

That's where we need.... We talked about collaboration and integration in what's happening with the industry. We do, through our centre here, all types of product development that industry drives or that R and D drives, but those are areas we can enhance if there are different types of products or if we do a discovery of what type of product the market will take.

With regard to your point, I think we need an integration of that knowledge of what you talked about.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: There is only one processor in Quebec to meet all the demand. Do you have any power of recommendation, within the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, among others, to get information out more?

I am wondering if it is possible to set up a round table to establish better communication. Could your organization launch such an initiative? Is this within its purview?

[*English*]

Mr. Keith Hutchings: Thank you very much.

It's something, yes, that we've been looking at on a broad basis in terms of the seafood industry in Canada. Whether it's seals or some other species or some other technology, there often seems to be a separation in terms of that information and knowledge.

CCFI could certainly work with you and others in industry to try to bring a national perspective to some of the items we talked about with regard to the knowledge and what's available with marketing with the seal industry. Certainly domestically—and internationally—it's something we could get involved with.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Caroline Desbiens: Thank you. What you are saying is very interesting and moves us forward.

Ms. Peter, you said that seal meat is shared. Do you feel that the different northern populations have enough access to this meat? Is there room for improvement in terms of meeting those populations' food needs? I know that some of them are in a state of deficiency. It is very natural in their environment to eat seal, and not having access to enough of it can alter their health.

Could access to this food for northern populations be improved?

[*English*]

Ms. Aaju Peter: Absolutely. We increased the access to seal in schools, for instance, as part of the school program. Nowhere in the Arctic or nowhere down south have I been able to buy sealskin for my own consumption. If you hold your hand out like this, the amount of seal in your hand equals an amount of 56 pieces of sausage if you were to consume it for iron.

The iron deficiency and food insecurity problem would be solved if we were to help the hunters' organizations—provide funding for the hunters to harvest the seals to share them in the community. They're already sharing their catch. They share their whale. They share their fish. They share their seal, because they're doing it out of their own tradition. They have to. It's the part of giving back to the community.

If the federal government were to help promote healthy living, good nutrition and lessen the food insecurity that we have in the Arctic, we would totally support that. It's education and retaining and maintaining our traditional knowledge.

Ms. Desbiens, thank you so much for this question.

• (1240)

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Desbiens. There are only five seconds left in your time, so we certainly won't go to another question.

Ms. Barron, you have six minutes or less, please.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for keeping us on track with our timing today to make sure that everybody gets a chance to ask these important questions. I really appreciate it.

The Chair: I am trying to keep everyone on track.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thanks, Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

Through the chair to Ms. Peter, I do want to express my appreciation for your being here with us today. I feel very grateful to be able to hear from you first-hand. I want to thank you for your work defending the human rights of indigenous people in the Arctic, and also to congratulate you. I know you received the Order of Canada in 2012. It's great to have you here and to share your knowledge and experiences.

I had the honour of visiting Nunavut with my colleague MP Idlout, the MP for Nunavut. I spent time in Iqaluit and Pangnirtung and had the opportunity to go out on a boat with MP Idlout and her family where we fished for Arctic char, and they taught me the names in Inuktitut of the different seals that we came across. It was an incredibly impactful experience.

I wanted to ask if you could expand a little bit more. I know my colleague, MP Hanley, had asked a little bit.... You had spoken about the impacts. I was wondering if you could share a little bit more on the impacts on Nunavummiut and other indigenous people of the international campaigns against seal harvesting and the reasons why, as you worded it, the colonial exemptions and patronizing rules and regulations were far from sufficient.

Ms. Aaju Peter: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for the question, Ms. Barron. I'm glad you were able to go to Nunavut. I wish everybody could come up and share some seal the way the former Governor General did.

In terms of the exemption, I was so against it when it was being talked about, because the Europeans think they can define who's Inuit and what is traditional and what is sustainable. However, under our Nunavut Land Claims Agreement within Canada, we define who we are and what our tradition is. That patronizing attitude has made it very hard for us, because it becomes administrative. We have to come up with the money in order to defend ourselves in court. We have to prove that the seal was caught in this particular way. At the end of the day, as we know, it's up to the European Commission, even after we've proven everything, to decide that the sealskin is not hunted properly or not in the way that the regulations are stating.

The other very negative impact it has had over time has been that, even for our young men and our young women, the imagery put on television about sealing and seal hunting, and about how bad sealing is, sticks with people. It's an image that we are having a really hard time fighting. Rather than going on and on about the imagery, what we need to do, and what we've been saying in the sealing industry that we need to do, is put the human face on the sealing issue: This is our life. You are impacting us. You are making a harsh life even harsher.

It's about education and then putting our stories out there about our traditions—5,000-year-old traditions, the lost hunting culture, the blue economy and you name it. As the other speakers have said, we need to turn the dialogue around to our dialogue, to our Canadian dialogue,

• (1245)

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron: Thank you so much.

With regard to the bans that we've seen and the exemptions that we've talked about, I've been hearing from others about the impacts on livelihoods and the capacity for Inuit to make ends meet. I'm wondering if you could speak a little bit to the impacts of these bans, specific to the market, on the people who relied so heavily on this market prior to these changes.

Ms. Aaju Peter: Thank you for that question.

As you know, Inuit have the highest rate of unemployment and the highest cost of living, which is three to seven times that of southern Canada. When the seal market crashed from \$100 to \$10, then the ability of the hunter to provide his free food, nutritious food, to the community.... It was catastrophic. It made it so that we had to live on less food. The ability of the hunter to provide for the community became very harsh. It meant that the hunter had to work five days a week just in order to be able to afford to buy gas and go out hunting so that he could share his food.

We are still practising the sharing of the food. As a non-hunter myself, we still expect our hunters to provide for us, which is really unfair. I think we should support the hunters so that they can keep providing this healthy food to the communities and create food security.

It's a tragedy. It's devastating. There's a term for it that I can't think of right now. We should look at it as a human rights issue right now that we don't have access. Seven children out of 10 go to school hungry. In Canada, one of the richest countries in the world, we are accepting that this is happening, but it's really not accept-

able. We have to do our part to secure that people have access to food—seal.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Barron.

We'll now go to Mr. Perkins, who is anxiously waiting, for five minutes or less, please.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, witnesses, for your very interesting testimony.

Ms. Peter, you used a term in your opening that I found interesting, which was environmental corporations. I look at them, in regard to seals, more as environmental businesses that have raised all of the funds to do the things they do off of seals. I wonder if you can comment a little more on that concept.

Ms. Aaju Peter: Thank you, Mr. Perkins, for your question.

That is not what I was saying. If I said it, then it was wrong. It was the animal rights groups that I mentioned.

Mr. Rick Perkins: I'm sorry. I meant the animal rights groups.

Ms. Aaju Peter: Can you say your question again? I would never call them "environmental".

Mr. Rick Perkins: The animal rights groups, with regard to seals, are really businesses more than they were anything else. That's had a devastating impact in a lot of rural communities in Atlantic Canada and in northern Canada. In particular, could you comment, first, on the impact that those businesses raising money from banning the seal hunt has had on your community?

If the government actually managed to advocate and get those markets open in the United States and Europe, what would that mean for your community?

Ms. Aaju Peter: Thank you for that question.

I have maintained that, with all the money that was raised by the animal rights groups—animalists, as they call them—they need to pay every Inuk from all the money they have made, \$1 million, to repair what damage has been caused and all the death and hunger that Inuit have suffered.

We have to aim high. We have to dream high and that's my dream. It's that more reparations should be given to the communities—not just the "we're sorry we harmed you" kind of attitude that Greenpeace had.

The impact on our community is the most severe, as we had mentioned before, because we are still a hunting culture. We still depend on hunting and sharing the food. When we can't share the food, then people go hungry and no money is made. When the price of the sealskin fell from \$100 to \$10, our own government had to compensate that amount of money because it knows how important it is for our hunters to keep feeding our communities.

Inuit have borne the cost of this.

• (1250)

Mr. Rick Perkins: Thank you very much.

MHA Pardy, we've heard some say...especially at the Seal Summit. The minister said more science needs to be done. I think Mr. Hutchings even said that.

When I look back on it, there's been an enormous amount of science done almost every year going back to the 1990s. Even the World Wildlife Fund put out a report in 2006 saying that northern cod would not recover on moratoriums alone and the government had to do something else. There are all kinds of fisheries studies on it. I put forward an Order Paper question on seal stomach samples just for the last five years and got 122 pages' worth of seal stomach samples produced by the Department of Fisheries.

Do we really need to have more science done before we act on getting a commercial seal harvest going again?

Mr. Craig Pardy: Thank you for the question.

We certainly do not. In our, I think, collective opinion within the House of Assembly here in Newfoundland and Labrador, we certainly do not need any more studies or any more counts to know the impact of seals on the rebuilding of our groundfish stock. I think the data speaks for itself.

As you know and are well aware, we have had harvesters display for the media the stomach contents of the seals. Everyone in Newfoundland and Labrador and everyone who was watching would indicate how much these predators consumed. You had Bob Hardy, who would be our foremost expert, on a panel at one time. I remember him quoting and saying that the harp seal population, according to DFO, would consume one million metric tons of capelin per year. We know how important capelin is, pelagically, to the rebuilding of any stock that we would have. When we have seals consuming one million metric tons and our harvest is 24,000 metric tons, we don't need another study to understand the significance of the predation that we face in our province and in our waters.

I just want to end with one thing. I listened to the broadcast. Todd O'Brien was in Placentia Bay at a river. I forget the name of the river, but this was back in September of the past year. He interviewed a river warden. He said the salmon in the rivers don't have a chance. He was telling Todd O'Brien the fact that there were 200 to 300 seals waiting at the mouth of the river for the smolt to leave, consuming them. He said they never had a chance to get by.

I think the more we wait to take action, the more grave our fishery resource, the rebuilding of it and the situation we find ourselves in is going to be. I would say that in our House of Assembly we're unanimous in that belief regardless of party.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Perkins.

We will now go to Mr. Heath MacDonald, for five minutes or less, please.

Mr. Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

Those last comments were very interesting. You need a market. We're not fulfilling our quota now in our harvest, so we need a market and that's where it starts.

I want to go to Mr. Hutchings.

Mr. Hutchings, we're seeing a lot of action on the Canadian side in trying to move the needle on the seal harvest, but what's happen-

ing on the U.S. side? Why are we not seeing the fishers on the U.S. side being more attentive to the situation?

We're seeing quotas being reduced in mackerel and the herring fishery in the U.S., but we don't seem to be having any information or parity on the seal harvest in the U.S.

• (1255)

Mr. Keith Hutchings: Thank you.

I'm not sure of your question. Could you tell me exactly what it is you want me to answer?

Mr. Heath MacDonald: Yes. Why are we not seeing any urgency in the U.S. fishery on the seal harvest?

Mr. Keith Hutchings: I'm not sure. I don't really know the answer to that question. I know there has been some activity off and on. I don't know whether predation is as big a factor as it is compared to what we see on the east coast and in the gulf. Then you have the Marine Mammal Protection Act. I don't know whether there's a reluctance to pursue that based on some of the challenges, that push-back there, in regard to that.

That's the best I can suggest for why that may be.

Mr. Heath MacDonald: I'll give you a situation that just happened on Prince Edward Island in the last 10 days. We have a company that was making bait. They were using a by-product of seal, and within that first week, they were notified by the U.S., under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, that if any of that by-product was used for lobster bait, they would stop accepting lobsters shipped in to the U.S. by Canada.

I think everybody around this table is on the same page on wanting to increase the seal harvest and wanting to find new markets and products, but the struggle here is how do we get to the next level with the United States? Is it through the fishers? Is it through additional trade negotiations? I think the Marine Mammal Protection Act is from 1972. It's obviously outdated, but it seems to be bullet-proof to some extent. Are we just dealing with total politics here, as we were in the mid-2000s when there was an animal rights...and when there was possible collateral damage to other seafood exports into the U.S. and we were seeing a call for a ban on Canadian seafood products?

How do we overcome some of this situation? It sounds as though, in general, we're all on the same page in Canada. We want to see a seal harvest. We want to see it grow. We want to see new markets created, but we're running into a wall. Is it totally political in the U.S.? What's your opinion on that?

Mr. Keith Hutchings: I think it's driven by agendas, but you make an interesting comment when you talk about industry and getting interconnected. Is that a basis to bring together the Canadian industry and American industry with regard to seafood and the fishery? Does that become the advocate and the lobbyist for change? I think that's a very interesting concept. I don't know what the coordination is with that, and whether that is something we should be pursuing as a nation, as a country. Obviously there are political machinations and lobbying going on in regard to the Marine Mammal Protection Act, but maybe it's an industry-driven initiative and we're going to have results from that perspective.

Mr. Heath MacDonald: I would agree with you. I think the most effective policies and decisions are sometimes made by those sitting here as government representatives, but are usually made by private sector and industries.

You still have to overcome the nuance of animal rights and the activists we've talked about. It's imperative. We can talk about food security and indigenous rights and reconciliation, but they don't care. We need to find a way to better explain the processes. I'm not sure if government-to-government is part of that process or if it comes back to the industry again.

What would you suggest that we as policy-makers sitting around this table try to articulate to DFO or to the bureaucrats at hand who are responsible for some of these decisions?

Mr. Keith Hutchings: I think I mentioned in my opening comments that there was a real requirement for a commitment. That's a national commitment. It's about elected officials who sit around this table. It's about industry. It's about adapting to a new market and a new vision of what a seal hunt is, and it's about the attributes and

the benefits of that mammal when it's harvested. I think it's a very holistic approach, and I think that's the direction we need to go in. Just one-off industry fighting or politics fighting doesn't work.

It's the task at hand, and I think it's all parties together with a clear vision of what you want and a national government, whoever that is, that stands and says, "This is important to Canada. We're going to pursue it, and we're going to provide the supports to pursue it."

● (1300)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. MacDonald. That concludes our questioning for today's meeting.

I want to apologize to Madam Desbiens and Ms. Barron for not getting to their two and a half minute sections in this part of it. We have to end at one o'clock. However, I would like to remind members to please be cognizant of the time they're using as we go along. If I were to add up everything from everybody who went over, we probably would have had time to get Madam Desbiens' and Ms. Barron's questions in as well. I'll try to be much stricter the next time.

On Thursday, of course, we will continue to hear from witnesses on this very important topic.

I want to thank Mr. Pardy, Mr. Hutchings and Ms. Peter for attending today's session, albeit virtually, and sharing their knowledge with the committee for when we do write our report.

Again, thank you, and to everyone, have a good day. The meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>