

Inter-provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium

2024 Report



The Foundation for Conservation of Atlantic Salmon

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Chairman's Remarks

On behalf of the Foundation for Conservation of Atlantic Salmon, I am pleased that the FCAS launched the first ever Inter-provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium. It was rewarding to all concerned, that nearly two hundred committed salmon conservationists came together from five provinces to talk salmon conservation. I am hopeful that this unprecedented and impressive gathering will help take wild salmon conservation to a new and much more effective level in helping save Canada's wild Atlantic salmon populations.


Passion and commitment of the many individuals and experts in the room was evident in the desire to protect and improve on wild Atlantic salmon and its habitat. This bodes very well for strengthening conservation action and achieving positive outcomes for the salmon and its habitat for future generations.

The symposium is focussed on promotion of partnerships and commitment to shared goals among diverse players. The Foundation firmly believes that collaboration and partnership needs to be taken to a whole new level. More than ever before, stronger partnerships among governments, Indigenous organizations, NGOs and community groups at the regional, provincial and local levels are vitally necessary if we are to stand any chance of improving wild Atlantic salmon conservation outcomes at this critical time in salmon history.

Importantly, the mission embodied in the Foundation for Conservation of Atlantic Salmon, fully commits us to helping move wild salmon conservation to a new and more effective level. Canada's wild Atlantic salmon populations are faced by many challenges and concrete action by those that can help move the marker is more necessary than ever before. We at the FCAS are determined to work hard in promoting and facilitating collaboration and partnership on a go-forward basis. This was the first inter-provincial symposium. You may count on the FCAS to arrange more such gatherings in each province and at the inter-provincial level on a regular basis.

To those presenters and participants who have helped us prepare an informative and engaging agenda for this unprecedented event, I thank you! I would also note special thanks to the staff of the Foundation; Charline McCoy, Stephen Chase, Kristen Milbury and Gert Lawlor for making the all the arrangements that made this special event a success.

Best wishes and thank you for being here!



Hon. Rémi Bujold, P.C., C.M.
Chairman of the Board of Directors



Honourable Rémi Bujold, P.C., C.M.
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Symposium Introduction & Analysis

Taking the Discussions Forward

Abstract

1. Integrated conservation action among the key government, Indigenous and non-government players is critically necessary for Canada to sustain its wild Atlantic salmon populations.
2. Without joint coordinated action, further, possibly irreparable, declines in salmon populations will occur.
3. Shared initiatives require inclusive and supported processes in each province.
4. Provincial partnership initiatives should be congruent with, but not await, a prospective *Restore, Maintain, Thrive: Canada's national strategy to ensure the future of Atlantic salmon (The Strategy)*.

Introduction

In 2022 and 2023, the Foundation for the Conservation of Atlantic Salmon sponsored provincial Atlantic salmon symposia in all provinces with a goal of fostering stronger conservation partnerships. Building on this theme, the Foundation organized the *Inter-Provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium* in October 2024. It was attended by nearly 200 individuals from Québec, NB, PEI, NS and NL.

This was the first broad-based gathering since the 1970s, providing the opportunity for sharing of ideas and experiences, networking, and to express their collective concern on the status of Atlantic Salmon. Poor returns of salmon and grilse during the 2024 season, on top of gradual decline in salmon abundance, have raised alarm in most of the salmon watersheds. Considering this, participants expressed concern for what they regarded as a grave threat to wild salmon and thus a demand for urgent action from governments and salmon organizations.

What else can we learn from this constructive event sponsored by the Foundation for Conservation of Atlantic Salmon (FCAS)? Without doubt, attendees shared a sense of urgency in stemming the decline as a matter of “time being of the essence”. The major challenges facing wild Atlantic salmon call for thinking “outside the box” and adoption of significant new approaches to improving salmon conservation outcomes. Feedback from during and after the symposium clearly supports a new and collective approach to salmon conservation efforts.

Traditional methods of salmon conservation can yield positive conservation results. Habitat can be improved, populations supplemented by stocking and protection measures implemented (reduced exploitation to outright closure). Broadly speaking, however, Canada's wild Atlantic salmon remain in a gradual decline at varying rates over time, dependent on the watershed and latitude. Thus, we need to do a better job in our conservation outcomes if we are to succeed.

Much hope has been pinned on a prospective DFO *Restore, Maintain, Thrive: Canada's national strategy to ensure the future of Atlantic salmon (The Strategy)* being developed following extensive consultations. *The Strategy* is, however, a DFO sponsored policy framework with the *possibility* of redirected internal DFO resources and the *possibility* of new funding in support of wild Atlantic salmon conservation. Importantly, *The Strategy* places emphasis on improved conservation planning through provincial Partnership Roundtables that would identify priority places (local level) and improve the commitment of resources and capacity of the participating organizations.

The Symposium Concept

The *Inter-Provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium* was conceived with the broad goal of fostering more concerted conservation action among the key government, Indigenous and non-government players. If Canadian wild Atlantic salmon are to be saved, this will only occur when people come together and decide how to proceed quickly and collectively. This notion underpinned the FCAS sponsorship of the earlier, very successful provincial symposia.

Symposium Introduction & Analysis

Taking the Discussions Forward

Beginning in 2022, with development of a new strategic plan, the FCAS facilitated a round of provincial partnership symposia in each province in partnership with the primary provincial salmon conservation organizations. These symposia were widely supported and extremely successful in concurring on the value and benefits of increased partnership.

The success of the provincial symposia then led the Foundation to plan an Inter-Provincial Symposium on Wild Atlantic Salmon to learn if increased collaboration and sharing of skills and resources among the five provinces was possible and desirable. No similar gathering had occurred since 1972, when an *International Atlantic Salmon Symposium* was held in St. Andrews, NB. That event was attended by over 400 scientists, managers, conservationists, and recreational and commercial fishermen representing twelve countries. It was followed in 1978 when the federal government launched the *Atlantic Salmon Review and Task Force*.

Considering the many salmon conservation challenges that had emerged in the decades since the 1970s, the concept of an open forum providing the opportunity for increased dialogue and greater collaboration leading to partnerships among governments, Indigenous organizations and wild salmon NGOs represented a vital step to addressing the decline in the numbers of salmon. The forum needed to be an event involving organizations, governments and individuals; each with critical roles to play, resources to contribute and willingness to devise both short and long-term solutions to wild Atlantic salmon conservation issues at the local, regional and national levels.

The *Inter-Provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium* featured several expert panels, case studies and collaborative breakout sessions/workshops designed to explore collaboration and partnership. In addition to the broad attendance to the event, video messages were provided by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Honourable Diane LeBouthillier and by Mike Kelloway, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister. Honourable Gudie Hutchings, federal Minister of ACOA, attended the symposium on the second day to express support and to highlight the importance of wild Atlantic salmon to Canadians. Transcripts of the video presentations by Honourable Diane LeBouthillier, Parliamentary Secretary Kelloway and Honourable Gudie Hutchings are provided in the appendices. Also provided is a synopsis of the post-symposium survey of attendees.

Throughout the symposium, participants delved into current challenges facing wild Atlantic salmon, shared successful case studies and traded innovative ideas, while providing valuable feedback in support of a comprehensive action plan for future conservation efforts. It is safe to say that this long overdue interprovincial gathering of wild Atlantic salmon interests was a success because it laid the groundwork for improved collaboration and partnership among interested organizations. The FCAS is proud to have supported and hosted this vital conversation on the future of wild Atlantic salmon.

The synopsis of symposium proceedings provides an outline of what was shared during the Inter-Provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium. We hope the reader will not only find it informative but will be encouraged to take up the challenge of seeking greater cross-organization collaboration and the concerted conservation action needed to save Canada's wild Atlantic salmon.

Analysis of the Proceedings

The general theme of the symposium was partnership, with partnerships occurring at the local level and also at a more broad level (ie., within a region, a province or among the five provinces). The discussion panels and workshops indicated support for more inclusive and comprehensive approaches to addressing conservation issues through strong partnership processes at the local and provincial levels.

Symposium Introduction & Analysis

Taking the Discussions Forward

Local Partnership: The provincial symposia held in 2022 and 2023 confirmed that partnerships at the river and watershed level, where they exist, are widely supported and perform well. Local partnerships certainly work and make good sense for a sharing of goals and resources. The partnership case studies presented during the symposium were selected to help analyze the utility and benefits that could be derived from an embrace of partnership at the local level. They illustrated the successes that can result from establishing a partnership to address specific conservation issues in the rivers and watersheds.

More precisely, the case studies demonstrated the willingness of local organizations to work together on shared goals, in a spirit of mutual respect, to address specific conservation issues. They also showed that recruitment of other organizations to leverage resources can enhance positive conservation outcomes. They stressed that a flexible and adaptive approach to program/project delivery, based in on-going monitoring and evaluation of project activity, is necessary.

Provincial and Regional Partnership: Concern for the well-being of wild Atlantic salmon is a collective concern and a collective responsibility. No single entity “owns” the salmon, yet each entity (potential partner) has capacity to improve conservation outcomes. Governments regulate and enforce fisheries and environmental policy, provide conservation support programs (scientific and environmental monitoring) and occasionally provide funding to incent conservation activity and behavior.

While government agencies have important tools to support and assist salmon conservation, they do not have the personnel available to deliver “on the ground” conservation action. The framework for more successful conservation outcomes can be facilitated by governments but the symposium discussions demonstrated that successful conservation outcomes depend on local groups with their mix of volunteer and paid human resources carrying-out the work.

These facts would indicate that there should be inherent benefits of partnership processes comprised of government agencies, Indigenous groups and non-profit organizations to facilitate improved salmon conservation beyond the local level.

Symposium participants supported collaboration on shared goals, better communication, a need for greater resources and more efficient use of these resources to help address complex challenges, enhance resource management and ensure the long-term sustainability of salmon populations, similar to sentiments identified through *The Strategy* consultations.

We could conclude that *the absence* of multi-lateral collaboration leading to robust policies, coordinated effort and pooled and focused resources represents an urgent need which could be corrected through creation of provincial partnership roundtable forums.

Conclusion

The Inter-provincial Partnership Symposium and the five earlier FCAS-sponsored provincial symposia highlighted enthusiasm, among NGOs, government and Indigenous organizations, to take bold new action in salmon conservation. Without doubt, the current situation is seen as urgent; that increased action is needed and that conservation of wild Atlantic salmon must be a shared effort.

The overall messages from presenters and participants during and following the symposium provided the material to conclude that partnerships, both local and provincial/regional, are valuable in saving wild Atlantic salmon. In other words, immediate, much more integrated, conservation action among the key government, Indigenous and non-government players is critically necessary for Canada to stand a chance of saving its wild salmon populations.

Symposium Introduction & Analysis

Taking the Discussions Forward

That chance of succeeding in conservation efforts must be considered as a shared initiative that can only occur through the creation of partnership roundtable processes in each province. The roundtables would review the conservation status of wild Atlantic salmon populations, identify the various issues, set priorities, and marshal the necessary human and fiscal resources to support conservation action.

Partnership initiatives should also be very supportive and closely linked to the prospective *Restore, Maintain, Thrive: Canada's national strategy to ensure the future of Atlantic salmon* and its associated funding.

Historic Notes

It is important to note some key past efforts toward strengthening endeavours in saving Canada's wild Atlantic salmon. We can also learn from them:

1. Joint salmon conservation action was contemplated by the *Atlantic Salmon Review and Task Force* in the 1970s.
2. We could act more quickly and deliberately on the recommendations of the 2015 *Minister's Advisory Committee on Atlantic Salmon*. The report resulting from this process was a product of broad consultations and recommended several topic specific joint discussions. This committee did not propose creation of a partnership process(es) to guide conservation action.
3. Minister's Advisory Committee on Atlantic Salmon did, however, recommend development of a new salmon strategy which resulted in creation of public consultations leading to the DFO *Restore, Maintain, Thrive: Canada's national strategy to ensure the future of Atlantic salmon (The Strategy)*. The draft *The Strategy* considers the creation of multi-lateral partnerships to improve salmon conservation.

Background

The Foundation for Conservation of Atlantic Salmon (FCAS) is an independent, federally incorporated, non-profit organization which was created in 2007. The Foundation was awarded \$30 million by the Government of Canada to create a trust fund intended to support wild Atlantic salmon conservation projects, in perpetuity.

The core business of the FCAS is to provide annual conservation project funding to recipient-partner organizations across five provinces to help improve conservation of wild Atlantic salmon. From its beginnings in 2007, however, the Foundation was also mandated to be a promoter of partnerships. Initially this was addressed through individual project grants which included encouragement of project applicants to partner locally.



Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Welcoming Remarks • Keynote Speaker • Partnership Case Study 1

Day 1 • 24 October 2024

Welcoming Remarks: The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard provided welcoming remarks to the Symposium (*Please see **Appendix A** for verbatim text*).

Summary: The Minister conveyed a message of commitment to conservation of Atlantic salmon together with her intention to invest in wild Atlantic salmon conservation. **Key points include:**

- **Importance of Atlantic Salmon:** The Minister highlights the cultural and economic significance of Atlantic salmon in Atlantic Canada and Québec.
- **New National Strategy:** The Canadian government is finalizing a national strategy for the conservation of Atlantic salmon developed and implemented in collaboration with Indigenous communities, grassroots organizations, and other stakeholders. The strategy is aimed at ensuring a healthy and sustainable future for Atlantic salmon and the ecosystems it depends on.
- **Delayed Publication:** While the Minister is eager to share the final strategy, she wants to ensure that it is accompanied by the necessary resources to support its implementation.



Keynote Speaker: Marshall Button

The speaker's main message is a call to action for the conservation of Atlantic salmon. He emphasizes the rich cultural and historical significance of salmon to the region, particularly in New Brunswick. He highlights the decline of salmon populations due to various factors, including climate change and overfishing, and stresses the urgent need for collective action to restore these populations.

The speaker uses humor and personal anecdotes to engage the audience and convey the importance of preserving this iconic species. He emphasizes the need for collaboration, scientific research and community involvement to address the challenges facing Atlantic salmon and ensure a sustainable future for this valuable resource.

Partnership Case Study 1: Inner Bay of Fundy Recovery

Presenters:

Corey Clark, Resource Conservation Manager, Fundy National Park, Parks Canada.

Tim Robinson, Senior Biologist, Fort Folly First Nation Habitat Recovery Program.

The main message of the presentation is that strong partnerships and collaboration are essential for successful conservation efforts, highlighting the successful partnership between Parks Canada and Fort Folly First Nation in restoring Atlantic salmon populations in the Inner Bay of Fundy.

Key Points from the Presentation:

- **Strong partnerships:** The collaboration between Parks Canada, Fort Folly First Nation and other stakeholders was crucial to the success of the project.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Presentation & Discussion Panel: Indigenous Knowledge & Leadership

- **Community engagement:** Involving local communities, especially Indigenous communities, can enhance project outcomes and foster long-term sustainability.
- **Adaptive management:** A flexible and adaptive approach is necessary to address changing conditions and emerging challenges.
- **Knowledge sharing and learning:** Sharing knowledge and experiences among partners can lead to innovative solutions and improved outcomes.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential to assess the effectiveness of conservation efforts and make informed decisions.
- **Positive Outcomes:** The collaboration has resulted in increased salmon populations, improved river health and strengthened community connections.

Presentation & Discussion Panel: Indigenous Knowledge & Leadership



Dr. Shelley Denny

Moderator: Dr. Shelley Denny

Panelists:

Allison McIsaac, from the Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife Commission.

Carl McLean, from Labrador, Member of the Foundation, Commissioner of Canada's delegation to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO).

Ross Hinks, from the Miapukek First Nation (Conne River), former member of the Newfoundland Advisory.

Jason Knockwood, from the Abegweit First Nation in Prince Edward Island.

The main message of the presentation is that Indigenous knowledge and leadership are essential for the effective conservation of Atlantic salmon. By incorporating traditional ecological knowledge with Western science, communities can develop more holistic and sustainable approaches to resource management.

The panelists emphasized the need for greater recognition and respect for Indigenous knowledge, and for increased opportunities for Indigenous communities to participate in decision-making processes related to salmon conservation to ensure the long-term health of salmon populations.

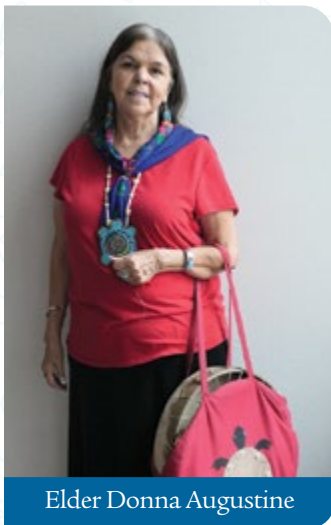
Key points noted by panelists include:

- **Intergenerational Knowledge:** Indigenous knowledge is passed down through generations, providing valuable insights into salmon ecology and behavior.
- **Connection to Land:** Indigenous communities have deep connections to the land and water and understand the importance of ecosystem health for salmon survival.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Partnerships between Indigenous communities and government agencies can lead to more effective and sustainable conservation practices.
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** Indigenous communities face numerous challenges, such as habitat loss, climate change and overfishing, but also have the potential to lead innovative solutions locally, nationally and internationally (NASCO).

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Discussion Panel: Indigenous Knowledge & Leadership

- **Cultural Significance:** Salmon holds significant cultural, spiritual and economic importance for Indigenous communities; highlighting the deep cultural and ecological connections between Indigenous communities and salmon.
- **Two-Eyed Seeing:** Combining Indigenous knowledge with Western science can lead to more holistic and effective approaches to conservation.
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** Overall, Indigenous communities are capable of playing a leading role in salmon conservation through traditional knowledge and sustainable practices.



Elder Donna Augustine

Elder Donna Augustine: Indigenous Ceremony and Discussion

Donna Augustine, a Mi'kmaq elder and cultural leader, shared insights into Indigenous culture, history and the importance of traditional knowledge in modern society.

Her key message was the importance of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives in environmental conservation and decision-making. She emphasized the deep connection between Indigenous peoples and the natural world, and the need to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into modern conservation practices. She highlighted the resilience and wisdom of Indigenous communities and the importance of honoring their cultural traditions and spiritual beliefs.

Overall, Elder Donna Augustine's presentation provided valuable insights into Indigenous culture, history and spirituality, and highlights the importance of preserving and revitalizing Indigenous traditions.

Key points from her presentation include:

- **Indigenous Knowledge and Spirituality:** She emphasized the importance of traditional knowledge and spirituality in Indigenous cultures, including the use of sacred medicines like sweetgrass, cedar and sage.
- **Historical Trauma and Resilience:** She discussed the impact of colonization, residential schools and cultural assimilation on Indigenous communities, but also highlighted the resilience and strength of Indigenous peoples.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** She emphasized the importance of honoring the natural world and living in harmony with it. She also discussed the interconnectedness of all living things and the need to protect the environment for future generations.
- **Community and Tradition:** She spoke about the importance of community, sharing and traditional practices, such as ceremonies, feasts and honoring ancestors.
- **Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination:** She emphasized the importance of Indigenous rights and self-determination, and the need to recognize and respect Indigenous knowledge and perspectives in decision-making processes.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Partnership Case Study 2 • Panel Session 1

Partnership Case Study 2: Salmon Rivers Conservation in Unamaki (Cape Breton)



Réné Aucoin & Sarah Penney

Presenters:

Réné Aucoin, President, Chéticamp River Salmon Association and Director of FCAS.

Sarah Penney, Resource Management Officer, Parks Canada.

This presentation outlined the importance of partnerships and people in achieving successful conservation outcomes. The presenters, Réné Aucoin and Sarah Penney, used the long-standing collaboration between the Chéticamp River Salmon Association (CRSA) and Parks Canada as an example of how partnerships can effectively leverage resources, expertise and community engagement to achieve shared goals.

They highlighted various successful joint projects, including river restoration, water temperature monitoring and fish tagging; emphasizing the benefits of increased scientific understanding, efficiency and public awareness.

The presentation also emphasized the crucial role of dedicated individuals in driving these partnerships forward, showcasing the power of personal relationships with shared goals and passion for conservation.

Ultimately, the message is one of hope and inspiration, demonstrating how collaborative efforts can lead to positive change and a brighter future for salmon populations and their habitats.

Panel Session 1: Who Should Be Partners?



Livia Goodbrand

Moderator: **Livia Goodbrand**, Senior Policy Advisor with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Fisheries Policy Team, Member on the Canadian Delegation to NASCO.

Panelists:

Dr. Eddie Halfyard, Carbon Run Environmental Services.

Butch Dalton, President of the Miramichi Salmon Association.

David Dunn, New Brunswick Wildlife Federation, member of the New Brunswick Advisory Committee.

Nick MacInnes, Nova Scotia Salmon Association.

This panel presentation addressed the importance of partnerships and collaboration in Atlantic salmon conservation. The panelists emphasized the need for strong relationships between government agencies, non-profit organizations and community groups to address the challenges facing salmon populations.

They discussed the benefits of partnerships, such as increased capacity, shared resources and a broader range of expertise. However, they also acknowledged the challenges of maintaining effective partnerships, including communication breakdowns, conflicting priorities and resource constraints. Learning from past experiences and embracing new approaches, we can build stronger and more resilient partnerships for the future.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Breakout Session 1

The panelists highlighted the importance of clear communication, shared goals and mutual respect in building successful partnerships. They also emphasized the need for flexibility and adaptability to address changing circumstances and emerging challenges.

The panel proposed ways to strengthen partnerships for the future, including:

- **Community Engagement:** Engaging with local communities and Indigenous groups as crucial for long-term success.
- **Innovative Approaches:** Leveraging technology and data-driven approaches to improve decision making and resource management.
- **Diversifying Partnerships:** Collaborating with diverse partners, including recreational users, environmental organizations and businesses, can broaden the scope of conservation efforts.
- **Building Capacity:** Investing in training and capacity building for community groups and organizations can strengthen their ability to participate in partnerships.
- **Adaptive Management:** A flexible and adaptive approach is essential to respond to changing conditions and emerging challenges.
- **Certification Process:** A certification process for community groups could enhance their credibility and capacity to participate in partnerships.

Breakout Session 1: What Are the Common Threads of Successful Partnerships?



Kathleen Blanchard

Moderator: Kathleen Blanchard, President, Intervale Associates.

Individuals at each table were asked to indicate key points in response to each question posed by the moderator.

Question 1: What makes for successful partnerships?

Input from the symposium tables reflected the importance of trust, communication, common goals, diversity, commitment, collaboration, flexibility, accountability, respect, continuous improvement and adequate resources in successful partnerships.

Trust and Respect

- Trust is crucial for functionality and success.
- Mutual respect and meaningful participation are essential.
- Building trust through experiences, consistency and clear communication.

Communication and Transparency

- Clear, honest and open communication is fundamental.
- Transparency in goals, data sharing and decision making processes.
- Effective communication strategies and understanding the audience.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Breakout Session 1

Common Goals and Vision

- Establishing shared goals, objectives and visions.
- Recognizing and working towards common ground.
- Aligning values and mission.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Embracing diversity in gender, age and cultural backgrounds.
- Inclusive of Indigenous knowledge and participation.
- Recognizing and valuing different perspectives and strengths.

Commitment and Engagement

- Dedicated and enthusiastic participation from all members.
- Consistent and reliable funding for continuity and progress.
- Meaningful engagement and buy-in from the community and stakeholders.

Collaboration and Partnership

- Willingness to work together and put aside differences.
- Identifying and complementing each other's strengths and weaknesses.
- Shared resources and responsibilities.

Flexibility and Adaptability

- Flexibility in roles, expectations and strategies.
- Willingness to adapt and compromise to navigate challenges.
- Avoiding rigid structures that hinder progress.

Accountability and Measurement

- Establishing clear roles, responsibilities and objectives.
- Accountability and transparency in actions and decisions.
- Measurement of success through well-documented and agreed-upon metrics.

Respect and Inclusion

- Ensuring everyone's voice is valued and heard.
- Respect for varied opinions and open-minded communication.
- Creating an environment where people feel valued and acknowledged.

Continuous Improvement and Longevity

- Continuous engagement, innovation and invigoration.
- Succession planning and maintaining long-term relationships.
- Celebrating successes and learning from failures.

Resources and Support

- Adequate resources, including financial, material and human.
- Support from political entities and government levels.
- Shared and distributed resources to benefit all partners.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Breakout Session 1

Question 2: What are the common threads of successful partnerships?

Collective responses by symposium attendees emphasized the importance of recognition, effective communication, inclusivity, transparency, consistency, adaptability, engagement, mutual respect and promotion in successful partnerships and communication strategies.

Recognition and Acknowledgement

- Recognizing all partners and their contributions.
- Proper acknowledgement and giving credit to all involved.
- Publicly celebrating successes, both big and small.

Communication Strategy

- Establishing a clear, written communications plan.
- Consistent, unified messaging agreed upon by all partners.
- Adapt communications to different audiences (public, media and community).

Effective Communication

- Effective and valid communication with partners.
- Being authentic, clear and concise in communications.
- Using visuals (pictures of before and after) to enhance communication.

Inclusivity and Cultural Sensitivity

- Including cultural considerations in communication strategies.
- Bilingual inclusion and respect for Indigenous rights and knowledge.
- Engaging youth and elders in communication efforts.

Transparency and Honesty

- Being transparent and truthful in all communications.
- Open dialogue and respectful language.
- Keeping partners informed about upcoming communications and internal matters.

Consistency and Clarity

- Consistency in messages across all platforms and partners.
- Keeping messages simple, using plain language and minimizing acronyms.
- Ensuring all partners' logos and names are included in materials.

Adaptability and Flexibility

- Adapting communications to different contexts and audiences.
- Embracing technology and thinking outside the box in communication strategies.
- Flexibility in presenting projects and media lines.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 1 • Panel Session 2

Engagement and Buy-in

- Getting buy-in on communications plans from all partners.
- Engaging the community and involving local media.
- Creating a dialogue of importance and framing information to produce buy-in.

Mutual Respect and Trust

- Respecting partners' opinions and avoiding internal conflicts in public.
- Trust in partners and their contributions.
- Sharing credit and accepting blame as a group.

Promotion and Outreach

- Inclusive promotion and site visits for projects.
- Social media presence across multiple platforms.
- Incentives like gift cards and contests to engage the public.

Panel Session 2: How Can Partnerships Be Measured for Success?



Dr. Carole-Anne Gillis

Moderator: Dr. Carole-Anne Gillis, Member, FCAS Scientific Advisory Committee.

Panelists:

Nathan Wilbur, Vice-President, Regional Programs, Atlantic Salmon Federation.

Corey Clark, Manager of Resource Conservation, Parks Canada at Fundy National Park.

Ethan Augustine, Senior biologist, North Shore Mi'kmaq District Council and Anqotum Resource Management.

Myriam Bergeron, Directrice Générale de la Fédération québécoise pour le saumon Atlantique.

The main message of this panel discussion is that strong partnerships are essential for effective Atlantic salmon conservation. Collaboration among diverse stakeholders including communities, Indigenous groups, environmental organizations and businesses can address complex challenges, enhance resource management and ensure the long-term sustainability of salmon populations.

Measuring the Benefits of Partnerships

- **Identify Shared Goals:** Identifying and attaining common goals amplifies impact and ensures a more comprehensive approach to salmon conservation. All partners should benefit from the collaboration, whether it's through resource sharing, knowledge exchange or capacity building.
- **Attract Diverse Expertise:** Partnerships bring together a diverse range of skills and knowledge, enhancing problem-solving and decision-making. Defining roles and responsibilities can help avoid conflicts and ensure efficient work.
- **Increased Capacity:** By pooling resources and sharing expertise, partnerships can significantly increase the capacity of organizations to achieve conservation goals.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 2 • Presentation by Mike Kelloway, MP • Panel Session 3

- **Stronger Voice:** A unified voice can influence policy decisions and secure greater support for conservation efforts.
- **Engage the Community:** Partnerships can foster strong relationships with local communities and Indigenous groups, leading to increased buy-in and long-term sustainability. Building trust, respect and open communication is crucial for effective collaboration.
- **Learning, Innovation and Flexibility:** Collaborative efforts can stimulate innovation, knowledge sharing and adaptive management. Partnerships should be adaptable to changing circumstances and be able to pivot as needed.
- **Positive Impact on Salmon Populations:** Ultimately, the success of partnerships should be measured by their positive impact on salmon populations and their habitats.

Challenges Affecting the Success of Partnerships

- **Resource Constraints:** Limited funding and personnel can hinder collaborative efforts.
- **Diverging Interests:** Different organizations may have competing priorities or conflicting goals that need to be addressed or balanced, up front.
- **Power Dynamics:** Unequal power dynamics can undermine collaboration and lead to inequitable outcomes.
- **Bureaucratic Hurdles:** Complex bureaucratic processes can slow down decision-making and project implementation.

Day 2 • 25 October 2024

The day commenced with a video presentation provided by **Mike Kelloway, MP for Cape Breton-Canso, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard** (*Please see Appendix B for verbatim text*).

Summary: The Parliamentary Secretary conveyed a message citing his and Minister Leboutillier's commitment to the urgent need to address the challenges facing Atlantic salmon conservation of Atlantic salmon. In particular, the importance of collective action of all stakeholders and working together.

Panel Session 3: Benefiting from Partnerships in Scientific Research

Moderator: **Dr. Rick Cunjak**, Canada Research Chair and Professor of the Department of Biology and the Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, University of New Brunswick, Member FCAS Scientific Advisory Committee.

Panelists:

Dr. Eva Enders, L'Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS).

Doug Bliss, Head of Canada's Delegation to NASCO.

Dr. Craig Purchase, Professor of Biology, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Dr. Val Ouellet, Vice-President, Research and Environment, Atlantic Salmon Federation.

The primary message of the discussion is the crucial role of science in effective salmon conservation. The panelists emphasized the need for rigorous scientific research, interdisciplinary collaboration and effective

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 2 • Partnership Case Study 3

communication to address the complex challenges facing wild Atlantic salmon populations. They also highlighted the importance of long-term funding and flexible timelines to ensure the success of research projects.

Overall, the discussion emphasized the importance of science-based decision-making in salmon conservation and the need for continued investment in research and monitoring with the panel **highlighting several key points:**

- **Essential Role of Science:** Applied scientific research is crucial for addressing complex salmon conservation issues. It provides the necessary data and understanding to inform effective management and restoration strategies.
- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Interdisciplinary approaches are essential for addressing complex ecological problems like salmon conservation. Collaboration between scientists from different fields can lead to more comprehensive and innovative solutions.
- **Effective Communication of Science:** Scientists need to effectively communicate their findings to both policymakers and the public. This includes using clear and concise language, engaging in public outreach, and collaborating with stakeholders to ensure that research is relevant and impactful.
- **Challenges in Funding and Timelines:** Securing adequate funding and navigating bureaucratic processes can be significant challenges for researchers. Longer-term funding and flexible timelines are essential for conducting meaningful research.
- **Balancing Scientific Rigor and Practical Application:** Balancing the need for rigorous scientific research with the practical demands of conservation can be challenging. Scientists must prioritize research questions that are both scientifically sound and relevant to real-world problems.

Partnership Case Study 3: The Restigouche River Watershed Partnership

Presenters:

Maxime Guérard, Biologiste, Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs.

Myriam Bergeron, Directrice Générale de la Fédération québécoise pour le saumon Atlantique.

Dr. Carole-Anne Gillis, Member of the FCAS Scientific Advisory Committee.

The discussion highlighted the collaborative approach to salmon management in Québec, involving various stakeholders such as government agencies, non-profit organizations and anglers.

Key points include:

- **River-by-River Management:** Québec employs a river-by-river management approach, tailoring regulations to the specific needs of each river system, which is embedded in the Québec's Atlantic Salmon management plan.
- **Partnerships and Collaboration:** Strong partnerships between government agencies, non-profit organizations and anglers are essential for effective salmon management.
- **Data-Driven Management:** Data collection, such as salmon counts and catch-and-release records, is crucial for informed decision-making.
- **Conservation and Habitat Protection:** Organizations are actively involved in habitat protection, restoration and monitoring.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 2 • Panel Session 4

- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Recognizing the impacts of climate change, efforts are underway to develop strategies to mitigate the effects on salmon populations.
- **Public Engagement and Education:** Engaging the public and educating anglers about conservation practices is essential for long-term success.

The discussion also touched on the challenges and opportunities for future wild Atlantic salmon management, including the need for adaptive management strategies, increased funding and continued collaboration among stakeholders.

Panel session 4: Understanding Atlantic Salmon Stocking: Social, Cultural & Scientific Perspectives



Dave Reddin

Moderator: Dave Reddin, Scientist Emeritus, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Chair of the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Committee.

Panelists:

Tyrone Paul, Abegweit First Nation.

Dr. Hannah Harrison, Professor of Biology, Dalhousie University.

John Batt, Aquatron Laboratory at Dalhousie University.

Dr. Kurt Samways, Professor of Biology, University of New Brunswick and the Canadian Rivers Institute.

The panel discussed the role of supplementation in Atlantic salmon conservation. There was a range of opinions, from skepticism about the effectiveness and potential negative impacts of hatcheries to a belief in their necessity to preserve populations.

The main message is that whether to employ hatcheries and stocking programs for Atlantic salmon represents complex issues with both ecological and social considerations. While there are valid concerns about the potential negative impacts of hatcheries on wild populations, they can also provide social and cultural benefits and offer a sense of hope in the face of declining salmon numbers.

The decision of whether to use hatcheries should be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the specific context and the values of all stakeholders.

In addition, the panel emphasized the importance of including diverse perspectives and knowledge systems in the decision-making process, including those from Indigenous communities and other non-scientific experts.

Key points:

- **Supplementation as a tool:** Some panelists viewed supplementation as a tool that should be used judiciously and with careful consideration of its potential impacts.
- **Social and cultural factors:** The social and cultural significance of salmon was emphasized, highlighting the importance of considering these factors in decision-making.
- **Scientific evidence:** The need for evidence-based decision-making was stressed, but it was also noted that this should not be limited to traditional scientific methods. Indigenous knowledge and social science should also be considered in decision making.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 2 • Presentation: Hon. Gudie Hutchings • Breakout Session 2

- **Climate change and habitat degradation:** The panelists acknowledged the significant impact of climate change and habitat degradation on salmon populations.
- **Urgent action:** Some participants expressed concern about the rapid decline of salmon populations and the need for immediate action, including supplementation, to prevent further loss.

Overall, the discussion highlighted the complexity of the issue and the need for a nuanced approach that considers both scientific and social factors.



Hon. Gudie Hutchings

Presentation: The Honourable Gudie Hutchings, Minister of Rural Economic Development and the Minister Responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (*Please see **Appendix C** for verbatim text*).

Summary: Overall, the Minister emphasized the importance of preserving Atlantic salmon for both ecological and economic reasons and called for a collaborative approach involving Indigenous communities, government and other stakeholders.

Key points include:

- **Importance of Collaboration:** The Minister emphasized the need for collaboration and reconciliation to protect Atlantic salmon.
- **Impact of Climate Change:** She highlighted the significant impact of climate change on salmon populations, including changing water temperatures, lower water levels and extreme weather events.
- **Importance of Indigenous Knowledge:** The Minister recognized the importance of Indigenous knowledge in salmon conservation and the impact of declining salmon populations on Indigenous communities.
- **Economic Value of Salmon:** The speaker discusses the economic value of salmon, particularly in the tourism industry.

Breakout Session 2: The 3P Action Plan – Planning, Priorities & Partnership: Where Do We Go From Here?



Doug Bliss

Moderator: Doug Bliss, retired Department of Fisheries and Oceans, first chair of the Atlantic Salmon Research Joint Venture Head of Canadian Delegation to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO).

Individuals at each table were asked to indicate key points in response to each question posed by the moderator.

Question 1: Why is watershed planning and priority setting so important to successful conservation outcomes?

1. Resource Optimization

- **Efficient Resource Allocation:** Prioritizing needs helps to allocate limited resources effectively.
- **Focused Efforts:** Concentrating on key issues maximizes impact.
- **Strategic Planning:** A structured approach ensures optimal use of time, funding and personnel.

Symposium Agenda & Summary

Day 2 • Breakout Session 2

2. **Informed Decision-Making**

- **Data-Driven Decisions:** Understanding the watershed and its challenges informs strategic choices.
- **Risk Assessment:** Identifying potential risks and developing mitigation strategies.
- **Goal Setting:** Defining clear objectives and milestones guides the conservation process.

3. **Effective Collaboration**

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Involving diverse stakeholders ensures buy-in and shared ownership.
- **Partnership Building:** Identifying potential partners and fostering collaboration.
- **Community Empowerment:** Empowering communities to participate in decision-making.

4. **Long-Term Vision**

- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Addressing long-term challenges posed by climate change.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Promoting sustainable practices for future generations.
- **Adaptive Management:** Continuously evaluating and adjusting plans to respond to changing conditions.

5. **Measurable Impact**

- **Performance Monitoring:** Tracking progress toward goals and measuring success.
- **Evidence-Based Decision-Making:** Using data to inform future actions and resource allocation.

Specific Points

- **Watershed-Based Approach:** Focus on the entire watershed ecosystem.
- **Indigenous Leadership:** Prioritize Indigenous knowledge and perspectives.
- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Incorporate climate change considerations into planning.
- **Community Engagement:** Involve the community in decision-making processes.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Track progress and adjust plans as needed.

Question 2: Can organizations find common ground for addressing river/watershed priorities?

1. **Community Engagement and Empowerment**

- **Direct Involvement:** Engage community members directly affected by river/watershed issues.
- **Community-Driven Plans:** Empower communities to drive the planning process with government support for resources.
- **Meaningful Engagement:** Ensure that community engagement is genuine and impactful.
- **Listening to All Views:** Actively listen to diverse perspectives and incorporate them into decision-making.

2. **Interorganizational Collaboration and Partnership**

- **Integrated Approach:** Foster collaboration among organizations, government agencies and stakeholders at all levels.
- **Shared Vision and Goals:** Establish shared goals and priorities to align efforts and maximize impact.
- **Open Communication:** Promote open and honest communication among all parties involved.

Appendix A

Verbatim text of presentation by Hon. Diane Lebouthillier

- **Trust and Respect:** Build trust and respect among partners to facilitate effective collaboration.
 - **Data Sharing:** Share data and knowledge to inform decision-making and identify opportunities for collaboration.
3. **Scientific Knowledge and Indigenous Wisdom**
- **Science-Driven Decision-Making:** Use scientific evidence to inform decisions and prioritize actions.
 - **Indigenous Knowledge:** Incorporate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives to enhance understanding of the ecosystem.
 - **Holistic Approach:** Consider the broader ecological and social context when addressing river/watershed issues.
4. **Government Support and Policy**
- **Incentive Policies:** Implement policies that incentivize sustainable practices and reward positive environmental outcomes.
 - **Regulatory Framework:** Establish and enforce regulations to protect water quality and ecosystem health.
 - **Funding and Resources:** Provide adequate funding and resources to support conservation and restoration efforts.
 - **Effective Governance:** Ensure effective governance and decision-making processes to address river/watershed challenges.
5. **Public Awareness and Education**
- **Outreach and Education:** Raise public awareness about river/watershed issues and their importance.
 - **Community Engagement:** Involve the public in conservation and restoration efforts.
 - **Transparency:** Be transparent about decision-making processes and scientific findings.

Appendix A

Verbatim text of the remarks presented by Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, to the Inter-Provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium on 24 October 2024:



Hon. Diane Lebouthillier

Honourable Diane Lebouthillier: *“I cannot be with you in person today. I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on the ancestral lands of the Mi’kmaq and the Maliseet. We have relationships that are respectful with all the peoples of this province.*

While working towards healing and meaningful reconciliation, the Atlantic salmon is an integral part of Canada’s heritage and history. The coat of arms of New Brunswick is adorned with an Atlantic salmon, as is the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The Atlantic salmon is likely part of your cultural tradition, personally, for example, in Gaspésie. I am attached to this species that is the pride of our rural regions and neighborhoods.

Appendix B

Verbatim text of presentation by Mike Kelloway, MP

I understand the importance you place on the Atlantic salmon, and you are right to prioritize the protection and recovery of Atlantic salmon for the economic and social well-being of many communities. In fact, these are the main motivations behind your conservation and habitat restoration work, like all of you.

Here today I recognize the importance of time and I am committed to ensuring a sustainable future for this species. This is why my department is working to finalize Canada's first national strategy for the conservation of Atlantic salmon. I am grateful to know that the development of the strategy has been done in a spirit of collaboration with many of you. Atlantic salmon need us to act now and the strategy must address the urgent needs affecting the species and our local ecosystems.

I want to announce the official launch of the national strategy for Atlantic salmon conservation with a funding of approximately \$20 million. These funds will be used to support Atlantic salmon populations and their habitat through the restoration of aquatic ecosystems, which will support populations and various local projects in each Atlantic province. This investment sets the tone for how we will support Atlantic salmon in the future, through the implementation of the strategy.

We will be working with you, Indigenous communities, and grassroots organizations committed to the management of the species to ensure a healthy and prosperous future for the Atlantic salmon.

I would also like to thank the Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation for organizing this event today, which brings together the community to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing and innovation, which is directly aligned with our vision.

So, to conclude, I know that some of you may be disappointed that I am not announcing the publication of the strategy today. Many of you are eager to see the final version of the strategy and to begin working on the various measures that will contribute to its implementation. However, I want to ensure that its publication is accompanied by the necessary resources to support its implementation from the outset. I look forward to fulfilling the commitment I have made to you and to all Canadians as part of this.

Have a good symposium and see you soon.”

Appendix B

Verbatim text of the remarks presented by Mike Kelloway, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to the Inter-Provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium on 25 October 2024:

Mike Kelloway, MP: *“Hello and bonjour everyone.*

I'd like to begin by sharing how important the interprovincial Atlantic Salmon Symposium and the work being done here is for the sustainability and the future of Atlantic salmon to come together with community in the spirit of a shared goal to ensure the future of Atlantic salmon requires two things dedication and effort.

I'd like to acknowledge the work, the hard work contributed by the Foundation and volunteers who organized this very event.

I'd also like to acknowledge the commitment of all of you who are participating today.

Your presence speaks to your commitment and passion for salmon, and it fills me with optimism to see the Atlantic salmon community, including indigenous communities and organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, scientists, and anglers coming together.

Appendix C

Verbatim text of presentation by Hon. Gudie Hutchings

We know that this species very existence is being challenged across much of itself and its loss in some areas causes feelings of loss.

In the face of declining salmon populations, we're also witnessing a loss of connection to identities and ways of life, particularly for indigenous communities.

As you know, the conservation of Atlantic salmon is complex, and we must consider all areas of impact cultural, social, ecological and economic.

That is why it's important that we come together to share knowledge, understand each other and work together with respect and compassion.

We have heard loud and clear folks, the time for action is now, especially in the face of climate change.

This summer was the hottest to date and we had to react fast by engaging environmental protocols on Atlantic salmon rivers.

Even in some places where we have never done that before.

That is why the Government of Canada and Minister Leboutillier is committed to doing to everyone who is here today and who continues to contribute to the future of this species in their own communities and their own rivers.

You are making a difference. Thank you."



Appendix C

Verbatim text of the remarks presented by **Honourable Gudie Hutchings**, Minister of Rural Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to the Inter-Provincial Atlantic Salmon Partnership Symposium on 25 October 2024:

Honourable Gudie Hutchings: *"Bonjour tout le monde. Hello everybody.*

So, everybody's belly is full, so it's my job to wake you up now. Look, I first want to acknowledge that we're gathered on the traditional, unceded territory.

Although Wolastoqey and the Mi'kmaq peoples and the territory is covered by the peace and friendship Treaty signed in 1725.

Because my friends, if we all don't hold hands and walk the path of reconciliation together, we're not going to make progress.

So, I'm delighted to see so many groups here from all over.

Charlene, executive Director Stephen Chase, Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq and to every partner in the room.

I see so many familiar faces, but I'm not going to start calling out names because I'm scared I'm going to miss someone.

Thank you for what you've done. Thank you for what you're doing and thank you for bringing us here today.

Appendix C

Verbatim text of presentation by Hon. Gudie Hutchings

Look, I've got to be... I get invited to a pile of stuff every day and they give me this list. We sit down once or twice a week and we go through all the invitations, and I'm like, my criteria is, is it something to do with my running? Is it something to do with my portfolio?

And then every now and then there's one that tweaks my interest.

So, this one came along and I put a big red circle around it, and I said, I'm going to this one because as your, as Remi noted, I think I grew up with a fishing rod in my hand.

I'm the youngest of four girls. My dad worked hard all his life and his passion was fly fishing. So, I knew if I had to, if I wanted to spend time with my dad and I better know how to learn how to do this. I was privileged and blessed to spend a lot of time with Lee Wolf and Joan Wolf.

Lee, as many of you know, made his mark in Newfoundland and Labrador and, matter of fact, the lodge that I built, I named it after the Riffing Hitch. You know, the double half hitch that we tie around the wet fly. You guys all know that. And I called it the riffing hitch because I wanted to leave a little wake behind.

And I'm still trying to do that in whatever life path I do have. As Remi said, I still live on a river. I live on the beautiful, majestic Humber River.

I grew up on the Humber River and I live there now. But look, living on a river, I don't have the knowledge of all of you in the room, but I've seen that river that I love and adore and bless change so much, you know.

Are the runs coming earlier or are they not coming at all? We're seeing lower water levels. We're seeing less predictability. We're seeing water temperatures, dangerously high water temperatures. We're seeing these extreme weather events that impact. So much.

I was just chatting at the table how we had this torrential downpour and rain that literally washed the roads, that now you've got more siltation going into to beautiful rivers that we need to protect.

So, climate change is real, my friends. Right.

And do we know there's lots of scientists in the room?

And I'm not going to challenge any one of those.

But, you know, do we know what is going to happen in the future with all these climate events and all the changes with water temperature and siltation and low water, high water, right.

*So, we've also, and I loved – I caught some of the comments on the way in here because we do have to relate to community and we have to relate to our indigenous communities, our passionate anglers and people who rely on these beautiful *Salmo salar* for their livelihood.*

Right from the Caspacia to the Miramichi to the Margaree salmon, our precious Atlantic salmon, are at risk.

We see important aujourd'hui avec dans dans de province du Québec et un partner des premiers nation qui veulent assurer la protection de salmon sauvage de l'antique.

Vous comprenez tout l'importance de ce poisson pour le Canada Atlantic.

The importance to protect the environment for normal.

We all know that First Nations rely on salmon long before the settlers did as an important food source.

Appendix C

Verbatim text of presentation by Hon. Gudie Hutchings

Of course, the Mi'kmaq settled along the waterways for the abundance of salmon, for ceremonial uses and many other uses as well. And the decline of salmon has changed the way of life for some of these communities, too.

So, the decline of our salmon threatens to erode generations of practices and traditional knowledge, and it's knowledge that should guide us in protecting Atlantic salmon and their habitat going forward. In New Brunswick and elsewhere.

Others have come to rely on the Miramichi and the Restigouche for their magnificent salmon fishing.

And I have to boast a little bit at home in Newfoundland and Labrador, we have 60% of the North America's best salmon, nearly 200 wild Atlantic salmon rivers from the Humber to the Gander to the Eagle and the Exploits and many, many more.

And they're all legendary rivers that have earned us all an international reputation among anglers.

And many in the room know that people come from around the world to see and experience this magic that we have, and what it's truly about to experience the thrill of catching that King of Fishes. And I still call it the King of Fishes.

And that's exactly what the Atlantic salmon is.

I see some tourism operators in the room, and they know darn well, you know darn well, that these are high value tourists that are contributing to our economy all through the Atlantic provinces and Québec as well.

You know, take the Margaree river system, the Atlantic Salmon Federation says it contributes \$3.3 million just in GDP to that area. And supports more than 70 full time equivalent jobs.

And we can use those numbers in every river across Atlantic Canada. And Québec. So there's value right now.

But there's more value to be had.

Destination Canada is the marketing arm for tourism for the country.

Recently reported that high value territorial, high value tourists want experiences in travel and want a better way to experience Atlantic Canada and Québec than learning how to tie a fly.

Wading into that magical river and casting a line in the hopes of landing and releasing a big, beautiful family. I know I can't think of much better.

I know I used to fish about 100 days a year. Now, I'm lucky if I fish one day a year, but I still get great joy in it.

Last week, ACOA launched a new program called the Elevate Tourism Project and it's a program for over two years, and its targeted investment to boost Atlantic Canada tourism offerings.

We have incredible tourism offerings here, but now with this targeted support, we want to help experiences – whether it's an accommodation experience or an actual experience, a tour boat, an outfitting add to your experience by elevating your experience.



Appendix C

Verbatim text of presentation by Hon. Gudie Hutchings

Do you need a little upgrade? Do you need help in some other things to take you to a new level and then get them hooked? Pardon the pun? So, the Elevate Tourism project is there.

If you know anybody who's an existing tourism operator, an existing experience operator, encourage them to apply because it's there to elevate the tourism product offering. But in your sector, of course.

And I'm looking at the group in the back that I know was passionate about that.

Without salmon, you have no tourism in the outfitting section in parts of our province. So, protecting them has to be job number one.

I'm going to tell you, believe it or not, I do worry at nights when I look at that beautiful river that I live on, what happens when the salmon return to spawn and there may not be a river there for them to spawn? That's a question that the scientists we all know.

The salmon have that magnet to the river they were born in. They know which river they are going to, right?

And we've got to make sure that we all recognize and I think in this room, I'm preaching to a room that recognizes that climate change is real.

But, friends, I can tell you not all politicians recognize that climate change is real.

But ask any angler and they will tell you that no doubt our rivers and our salmon are under threat from climate change, low waters and high water temperatures are impacting.

I know, I like I said, I grew up in western Newfoundland and I'm a little older than Kastine, but we all remember the snow that we used to have and we certainly don't have that anymore.

So that's having an impact on our rivers and our ecosystem as well. We've got less runoff, so we've got less nutrients in the rivers and we've had reports of warm water sharks off the coast of Newfoundland. We certainly haven't seen that.

And but just lakes and streams and rivers are just one part of the equation. We have to work internationally. We have to ensure that Canadian salmon have the highest possible survival rate in the open ocean. We've got to include reducing bycatch in our fisheries. We've got to work through NASCO and other organizations to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

And look on that journey that per then smolt and grilse all the way to adult salmon every step of the journey of the life cycle of these beautiful salmon.

We all have to protect, enhance and do everything we can to keep them coming back.

I have two little granddaughters now, one is 25 months. The other one is six months. And I'm going to tell you, I can't wait. And I'm determined and I'm going to be able to take them fishing with a fly rod at some point in time.

This summer I was in Grand Falls-Windsor on the Exploits River, where we contributed more than \$1 million to a project led by Memorial University and IRMA, the environmental Resource Management Association.

Anybody hear from IRMA today? Yes. There you are. Yes.

And that was to rebuild and restore salmon habitat along the Exploits River and that's part of a bigger \$75 million investment in projects that will restore aquatic ecosystems, to repair some of the damage that humans have done to our most sensitive marine ecosystems.

Appendix C

Verbatim text of presentation by Hon. Gudie Hutchings

And there's more work underway across the region that's helping support salmon populations.

But one size doesn't fit all and that's why place-based management is critical.

For example, in the Inner Bay of Fundy, Atlantic salmon are listed on the Canada species of that act.

You know all about SARA. And in response, the Fort Folly First Nation have been working on habitat restoration since the late 90s. And I stopped by there this morning.

I was out at Salisbury, and it was incredible to chat with the fellows in the river. They were telling me that, yes, they had seen the salmon that day. They had some tomcod, so they were excited about what they were seeing.

So we need to do the recovery work and figure out what's going on and how we can slow down and hopefully prevent on rivers in the area. So thanks to the efforts, in 2023, Fundy National Park saw 35 year high in salmon returns.

I know sadly, that's not everywhere, but progress is possible. Progress is only going to happen if we all work together at every level. And that's why I'm so encouraged by all the groups, by all the communities in the room here today. And the groups that have stepped up to come together for the precious Atlantic salmon.

*We have to do it for our First Nations communities, for our tourism operators and for everyday anglers, and for their survival of our beautiful salmon, *Salmo salar*.*

And I want to let you know you have an advocate in me, because I definitely want to get the enjoyment with little Victoria and little Cara that I had with my dad, that I know each and one of you had.

So, thank you for the work that you do. Thank you for the work that you're going to do.

We have an advocate, and if there's anything I can do for this wonderful species, never hesitate to reach out. Take care everyone.

And again, thanks for the invitation.”



Appendix D

FCAS Fact Sheet

Appendix D: FCAS Fact Sheet

Background

In 2007, The Foundation for Conservation of Atlantic Salmon (FCAS) was awarded \$30 million by the Government of Canada to create a trust fund intended to support wild Atlantic salmon conservation projects, in perpetuity.

The Foundation funds its project grants from income earned on the trust fund. The 31 January 2024 market value of the trust stood at slightly over \$44.6 million. The Foundation is required to maintain an inflation adjusted book value of the trust fund (May 2024 = \$43.8 million).

Results (to May 2024)

Since 2008, FCAS has granted **\$15.7 million** to **880 projects** from over 1100 funding proposals, following a rigorous assessment process.

FCAS total funding distributed to the five provinces (all years) is as follows:

- New Brunswick: \$3.69 million
- Newfoundland & Labrador: \$3.85 million
- Nova Scotia: \$1.66 million
- Prince Edward Island: \$1.54 million
- Quebec: \$3.04 million
- Scientific Advisory Committee: \$1.95 million

FCAS funds have leveraged more than **\$78 million** in overall project valuation from other sources for an impressive **leveraging ratio of 5:1** (to May 2024).

FCAS funded projects have resulted in major conservation improvements (to December 2023):

- **182 million** square meters of **habitat access opened**.
- **6.74 million** square meters of **improved habitat (in-stream and riparian)**.
- **11,065 volunteers** contributed 240,580 hours of effort.
- **177,843 individuals** involved in **education & awareness**.
- **\$1.88 million** contributed to **90 Indigenous organization projects**.
- **\$3.32 million** contributed to **155 applied scientific research** grants, aimed at improving the effectiveness of conservation effort.
- **3,955 jobs sustained**, mostly in rural areas.
- **Eco-tourism** opportunity improved: FCAS funded projects help strengthen an eco-tourism industry worth several hundred million dollars annually in 5 provinces.

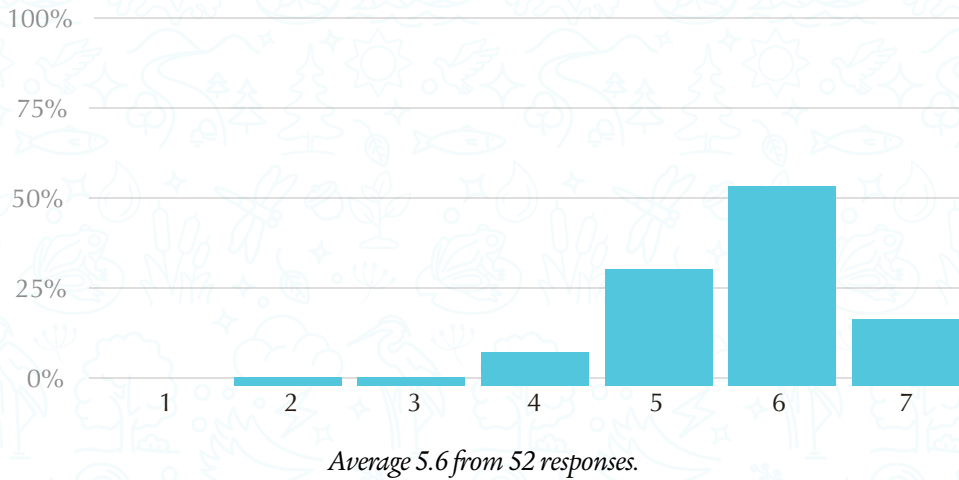
In addition to expert advisory committees in each province, the **FCAS** has a world class **Scientific Advisory Committee** advising it on critical applied research issues and wild salmon research priorities. Some of Canada's top salmon scientists are members of this prestigious committee.

Appendix E

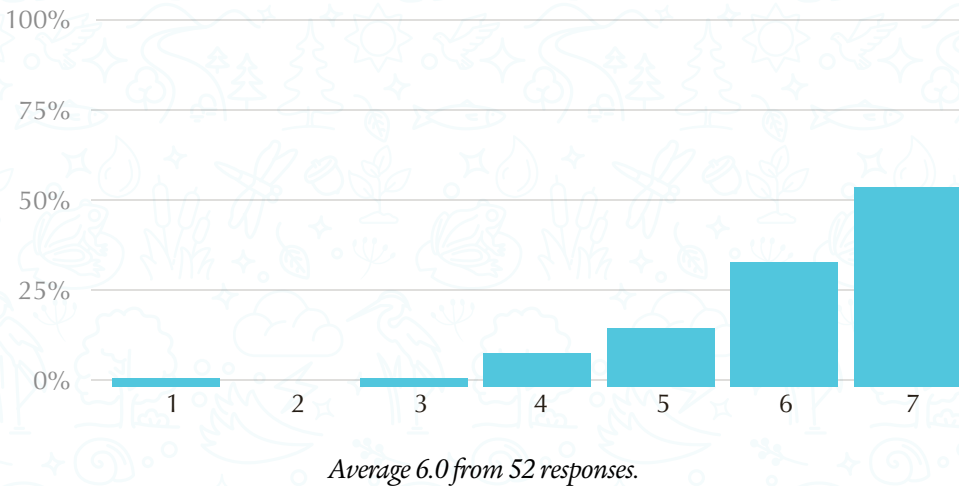
Follow-up Survey Results

Appendix E: Follow-up Survey Results

Question 1: “How satisfied were you with the event?”



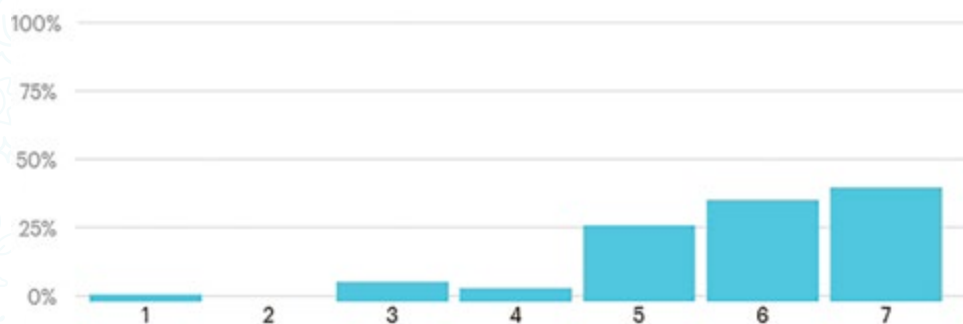
Question 2: “How likely would you be to attend our events in the future?”



Appendix E

Follow-up Survey Results

Question 3: “How likely will you recommend this event to a friend or colleague?”



Average 5.8 from 52 responses.

Question 4: “How would you describe your overall experience at the event?”

“Très enrichissante”

“I attended only the first day. The contacts and side discussions were the most rewarding part of the symposium. I do understand that FCAS mandate is to distribute funding and it does an excellent job. I did miss the second day but feel some of the time spent on day one was not relevant to the issue at hand. It is outside the mandate of FCAS but I feel with the excellent people in the room there could have been a focused discussion on steps that need to be taken to save salmon. I personally found the brief video by the Minister was insulting to a group of people who work so hard to protect salmon. It shows the Federal Government lack of commitment.”

“Overall, the event went smoothly, the schedule was kept on track, guest speakers, keynote and panelists were great and the food and venue was great.”

“Very informative”

“Generally positive. A lot of good presentations and opportunity to network. Perhaps a bit short at time to ask questions for the panel sessions.”

“I believe I had an overall good experience at the event. I was unable to attend the reception so I definitely wasn't able to network as much as I would have liked. It was great to have an overview of what some of the other groups are doing and seeing the positive change that conservation/restoration is making.”

“L'événement était un besoin, bien organisé. J'ai senti beaucoup de sensibilité à l'inclusion, notamment avec le français. Belle présence de groupes des Premières Nations. J'espère que la prochaine fois sera au Québec et donnera l'occasion à tout le réseau de nos membres d'avoir accès à ce bel événement! Car en effet, c'est toujours un défi pour les frais de déplacements pour les organisations, c'est sur que si on pouvait avoir un fonds pour les organismes pour avoir accès à une petite aide financière, ça augmenterait probablement la participation. Je sais que ce n'est pas simple, mais peut-être à réfléchir :)”

“Satisfaisant”

“The gathering of a fantastic group of people was great, but the agenda could have been more useful.”

Appendix E

Follow-up Survey Results

“Good”

“This event was a great start by getting representatives from all five provinces together face to face to discuss Atlantic Salmon. In our next event I would like to see some effort/information on what happens when our fish leave our rivers”

“It was great, loved the food, service, and agenda.”

“Very positive and inspiring”

“Very informative.”

“It was good”

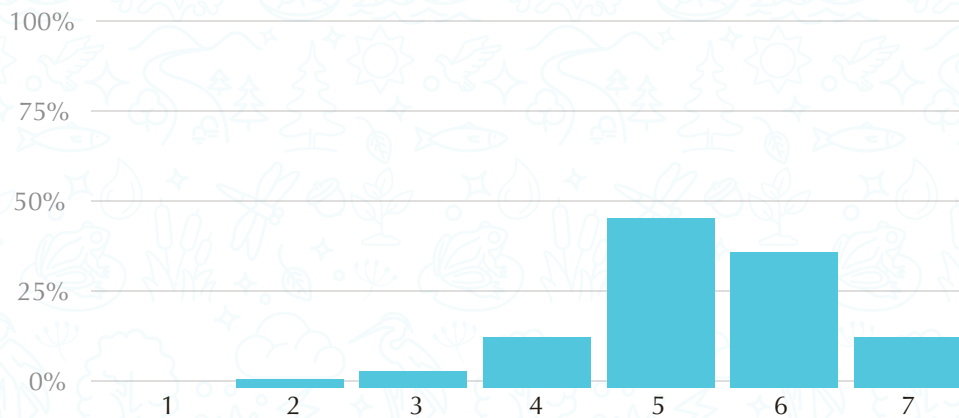
“Collaborative, innovative, diverse”

“The event was well run. It had good flow, and the fact that it was fully catered was great.”

“Most enjoyable and great to see the interest in salmon.”

“Well needed forum for general salmon conservation. It is important at this stage in salmon abundance that all involved in salmon sit and speak together about what is important to them. At least once every year or 2. This will reduce the building of camps between groups and best encourage a collaborative and respectful approach to solve problems.”

Question 5: “How useful was the event?”



Average 5.3 from 51 responses.

Question 6: “Did the event meet your expectations?”

Yes / oui



No / non



Appendix E

Follow-up Survey Results

Question 7: “If No, why?”

“again only attended one day, the issue for Atlantic Salmon is crucial . The time for directed action by all is now, not sure I see the urgency, certainly not by the Federal Government”

“Generally yes but I think was was missing to me was some kind of tangible outcome that suggested a path forward on the issues probed in the Panels. Perhaps that will be addressed in some way in the follow up report on the symposium?”

“Agenda items should have been different. Especially day 1. The keynote speaker was a flop. That time could have been much better spent in other ways.”

“I feel like the opportunity for partnership was quite minimized compared to how the event was marketed. I was expecting more emphasis on creating new partnerships and taking more collaborative approaches to salmon conservation, rather than a “show and tell” of larger partnerships that are on-going.”

“Pour moi, la semaine était satisfaisante parce qu’il y avait la rencontre de la Joint Venture juste avant. Je crois qu’il aurait eu une place pour faire un topo de situation et des causes hypothétiques de la mortalité observée et que cet aspect manquait.”

“it exceeded my expectations”

“The minister should have announced immediate funding and been there in person”

“Partnerships are important so I do not want to discount the discussion topics on Thursday... but most of us were under the belief it would be more work focused.. eg how can we further our efforts from a work perspective. Again, not to say the partnership dialect wasn’t almost important. It appears there are a lot more opportunities for partnership between groups in Nova Scotia, as we rarely have issues with this”

Question 8: “What was your favorite experience or moment of the event?”

“Les études de cas et les moments de réseautage.”

“I was very impressed by the indigenous speakers.”

“The most entertaining aspect was definitely Marshall as keynote speaker”

“The project presentations and the opportunity to chat with other delegates on issues.”

“The panel discussion about hatcheries and stocking programs was the most exciting.”

“The large gathering of people.”

“My favourite experience was getting to see the positives/success stories of some of the groups at the event. We are all working for the greater purpose of improving salmon population numbers, though we may be using various techniques and approaches - so it is great to see these efforts working out and showing results.”

“Les panels étaient bien organisés et les participants bien intéressants. En ce qui concerne l’ensemencement, j’aurais aimé avoir plus de points de vue différents, mais c’était très intéressant.”

“Bien organiser possibilité de rencontrer les intervenants dans le monde du Saumon”

Appendix E

Follow-up Survey Results

"The networking opportunities"

"the panel led by shelley denney"

"My favourite was listening to the indigenous representative speech."

"Networking during breaks"

"Presentations of community projects and discussions with individuals on partnership"

"Meeting people from the five provinces and break out sessions"

"A chance to speak at a open mic"

"The hatchery panel and the restigouche presentation"

"Stocking panel and discussion was clearly needed and clearly important to all"

"The panel discussions and the description of the very successful Fundy salmon restoration project. Very positive and offers hope for addressing the situation in the Miramichi and other rivers with significant declines."

"Lots of variety in material presented, but for me, a bit too many panel discussions as some seemed to get a bit repetitious. Not a complaint - just a comment"

"Panel discussions, presentations, and round table discussions were helpful. Particularly round tables with people from other provinces."

"I enjoyed the presentations by other watershed groups (Cheticamp, Restigouche)"

Question 9: "What could we improve on?"

"S'assurer d'avoir des panels d'experts représentatifs de différents points de vue sur un sujet. Par exemple, le panel sur l'importance de la recherche ne contenait que des chercheurs, alors nous savions déjà que leur avis était le même sur le sujet. Idem pour le panel sur les ensemencements"

"More presentations and less panels"

"More focus on salmon issues"

"Maybe try to find a bit better balance on time for questions and answers. Via either less crowded agenda or longer sessions?"

"Facilitating an actual networking event during the day would be great - I believe this would aid in growing actual partnerships and collaborations between groups attending. Also, making panels more diverse would be great to see. While some of the panels had some great and diverse speakers, I was very surprised that a couple of the panels were run by predominantly white cis-male members. I was even more surprised when one of the people guiding the panel went as far to tell people that if they "were not represented" by the panel that they could take the empty seat at the table. Adding some younger voices to the panel would be great too, as people of my age and younger are the ones that will continue a lot of the ongoing work long after our predecessors have retired or moved on. More break-out sessions would have been good as well, they were a great time to pick other people's brains and see what answers the question would pull from different people."

"The other panels were good and the speakers made good points, but I think that there needs to be more thought put into the questions asked and maybe make the questions more straight forward."

"Better agenda. More ways to get this large group of people to actually meet each other."

Appendix E

Follow-up Survey Results

“Au niveau de la transmission des informations relatives à l'événement et l'horaire, transmettre plus clairement les informations et idéalement plus tôt.”

“Parfait”

“It was great, the only thing I would argue is maybe giving the floor to all the participants so everyone can express/participate in the discussions.”

“More project presentations. More discussions on difficulties of developing partners”

“People on the panels need a time set to respond to questions. Saw people standing up to ask questions but didn't have a chance.”

“The opening keynote was off target. It is a good idea to involve non typical voices in the tone setting like this. I especially like arts and culture being involved, they are more important in conservation than most science. However, the actors content was off the mark in a few areas, specifically in respecting indigenous community position in salmon conservation.”

“more time for breaks during the day”

“Perhaps fewer panel discussions and more presentations. I've noted previously, maybe invite someone from the Pacific Salmon Foundation for alternate perspectives”

“questions for the panel and break out groups were a bit on the nose”

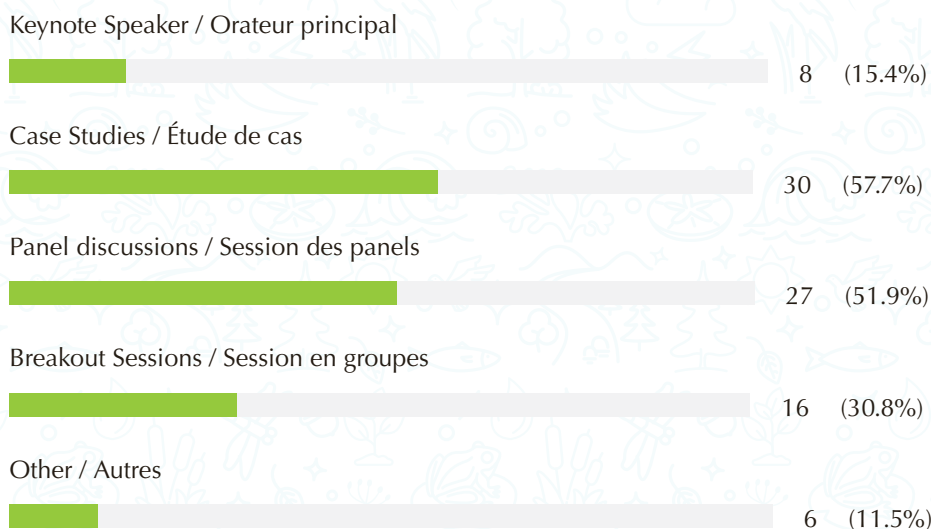
“a little more network time. potential assigned seating for the break out sessions where tables have a mix of backgrounds”

“More info on obstacles affecting our fish when they leave our rivers”

“The address by the DFO Minister was AWFUL. No substance and simply disappointing when many of us were expecting a substantive announcement. A waste of time. In the future, these valuable timeslots should be reserved for someone committed to deliver significant info and not political blather.”

“More relevant introductory speaker. He was very entertaining but not much about salmon.”

Question 10: “Which part of the event were you most pleased with?”



Appendix E

Follow-up Survey Results

Question 11: “Why that part of the event? (details)”

“Car elle permettait d’apprendre plus en détail sur ces études de cas qu’on ne connaissait pas jusqu’à présent”

“Very informative”

“Our breakout group did focus on specific issues that might have been outside what we were asked to discuss”

“First hand experience of challenges of undertaking projects and efforts required to be successful”

“Notwithstanding the limited time for Q&A, I thought the panel topics were timely and the speakers had well thought out responses to the questions posed.”

“Informative, and also a chance to hear people’s views”

“It’s interesting to hear and see what is working and may not be working.”

“Panels are a good model to deliver info to a large groups.”

“Well done.”

“The case studies were really interesting because I got to see how other groups work together (how duties are shared, communications, etc.), the types of technology, and methods used to achieve goals. As i mentioned, the second day panel discussion about hatcheries and stocking was very interesting because it is a really tough and somewhat mysterious topic. I think the other panel discussions should have been more about other “controversial” topics in the Atlantic Salmon recovery community.”

“I would vote to have more case studies in key areas presented than the break out sessions”

“Provided specific examples that were likely of broad interest.”

“It was useful for understanding who people were, having opinions from people who work on certain issues, and providing opportunities from the audience for questions. The topics of these panel discussions though could have been improved.”

“I enjoy hearing about what projects other watersheds groups have been working on/completed. It’s a good way to see all the work that’s being done around the region for salmon. It’s also a good way to connect with other people doing similar work, especially from other provinces”

“i can’t pick!!”

“The case studies were a great addition, as it is always nice to see positive results - or at the very least what seems to be working for some groups. I also enjoyed the breakout sessions as it was a great opportunity to hear other peoples thoughts and approaches to things.”

“These parts were more informative and it was interesting to see how other groups/provinces do things”

“Pending on your group you get to see other groups thought process and angles they use to meet their obstacles”

“It allowed the audience to express their opinions and comments on certain matter, rather than a panel that excludes the participation on the audience (in this case only allowed a few questions from the audience due to time constraints).”

“Having the opportunity to listen to four bright minds on a panel is second to none”

“These provided the most useful information for participants. I am not a fan of breakout sessions.”

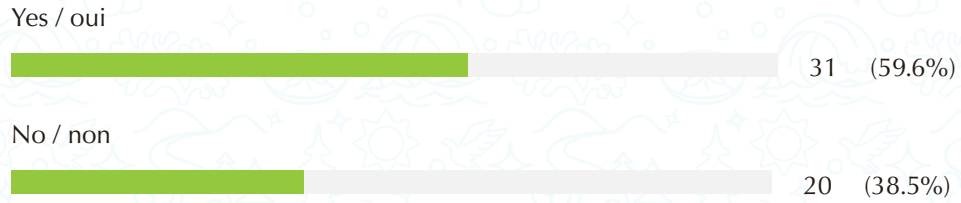
“Nous permet de voir les autres réalités des organismes”

“Very good speakers with a lot of information to share.”

Appendix F

Symposium Organization

Question 12: “Did you have sufficient time to network?”



Appendix F: Symposium Organization



Hon. Rémi Bujold
Chairman



Charline McCoy
Executive Director



Stephen Chase
Moderator and Emcee



Gert Lawlor
Symposium Support



Kristen Milbury
Symposium Support

Appendix G

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