

# Fraser River salmon fishery falls short of sustainability certification

BY VIVIAN LUK, VANCOUVER SUN JULY 6, 2010

B.C. sockeye salmon fisheries in the Skeena, Nass and Barkley Sound were certified by the Marine Stewardship Council for sustainable fishing practices last week, but the Fraser River has yet to meet their standards.

An MSC eco-label on wild B.C. sockeye salmon sold in the marketplace confirms that the fish was harvested in a way that maintains stock health, protects marine biodiversity, and respects international, national and local standards for responsible fishing.

According to the Watershed Watch Salmon Society, which filed an objection to certification with the David Suzuki Foundation and SkeenaWild Conservation Trust in February, the Fraser River fishery does not meet the MSC's criteria.

"The fishery routinely harvests sockeye salmon from endangered populations such as the Cultus Lake sockeye and Sakinaw Lake sockeye," said ecologist Aaron Hill. "The problem is all sockeye looks the same to fishermen. If MSC certifies Fraser River, you would have endangered salmon in grocery store shelves."

The assessment for Fraser River began last year, when only 1.4 million sockeye returned even though the Department of Fisheries and Oceans projected up to 10.6 million.

"It was a catastrophe," said Sto: lo First Nation fisheries adviser Ernie Crey. "No one knows what happened to those 'missing' fish."

[vluk@vancouversun.com](mailto:vluk@vancouversun.com)

© Copyright (c) The Vancouver Sun