



Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon (WSP)

Questions and Answers

BACKGROUND

What is the Wild Salmon Policy?

Canada's Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon, commonly referred to as the *Wild Salmon Policy* or WSP, was released by the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in 2005 following more than six years of discussion and consultation with First Nations, partners, and stakeholders. The goal of the WSP is to restore and maintain healthy and diverse salmon populations and their habitats for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Canada in perpetuity.

The WSP is not a program; rather, it is one of the policies that guide the work of DFO staff and others as it relates to conservation and sustainable management of wild Pacific salmon.

For simplicity's sake, the original WSP will be referred to within this document as the "2005 WSP;" whereas the updated document will be referred to as the "updated WSP."

Why was a decision made to update the 2005 WSP?



Since publication of the 2005 WSP, there have been changes to legislation, policies, and programs related to conservation and sustainable use of wild Pacific salmon, increased knowledge about wild Pacific salmon, and increased experience in implementing the WSP. In addition, DFO has received recommendations with respect to WSP implementation through the Commission of Inquiry into the Decline of Sockeye Salmon in the Fraser River (Cohen Commission) in 2012, and an independent review of the policy by Gardner Pinfold in 2011. All of these factors led to the decision to update the 2005 WSP and develop an updated Implementation Plan.

What changes are anticipated with respect to the 2005 WSP?

The 2005 WSP included both policy (goal, objectives, guiding principles) and implementation (strategies, action steps) elements. The updated WSP would retain the goal, objectives, and guiding principles from the 2005 document, with revisions as necessary to reflect changes to legislation, policy, and programs. The most significant changes would be: 1) With respect to the replacement of the previous DFO Habitat Management program with the Fisheries Protection Program; and 2) Removing the implementation aspects (Strategies and Action Steps) from the policy document and developing a separate, updated implementation plan. It is important to note that there is a review of the 2012 changes to the *Fisheries Act* underway. When the outcomes of



this review are available, they will be considered and further changes to the updated WSP may be required.

Why would the policy and implementation aspects of the 2005 WSP be separated?

The WSP (i.e., the policy) is meant to be an enduring document. After 11 years, the goal, objectives, and guiding principles are still current and important. The implementation aspects, referred to in the 2005 document as Strategies and Action Steps, require updating when one considers changes to legislation, policy, and programs, as well as increased knowledge of wild Pacific salmon and experience in implementation of the 2005 WSP. As well, DFO committed under Strategy 6 of the 2005 WSP to make revisions to the WSP based upon the results of a review. So, in future, the policy document would be enduring, while the implementation aspects would be evergreen and may be updated as required. .

UPDATED WSP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (DRAFT)

What will be included in the updated WSP Implementation Plan (draft)?

The Department is in the process of developing an updated Implementation Plan draft, for the purposes of consultations. At this point, draft sections include background, strategic context (i.e., legislation, program, policy context and recommendations received from reviews), progress to date, and internal WSP implementation governance. The main section of the plan, the forward looking implementation piece, is structured around three proposed pillars:

1. Assessment Work;
2. Integrated Planning and Program Delivery; and
3. Effective Collaboration.

The first two pillars (Assessment Work and Integrated Planning and Program Delivery) would set out the work that DFO will undertake in the coming years to continue to implement the WSP. The Effective Collaboration pillar would emphasize the need for better collaborations with First Nations, partners, stakeholders to implement the WSP.

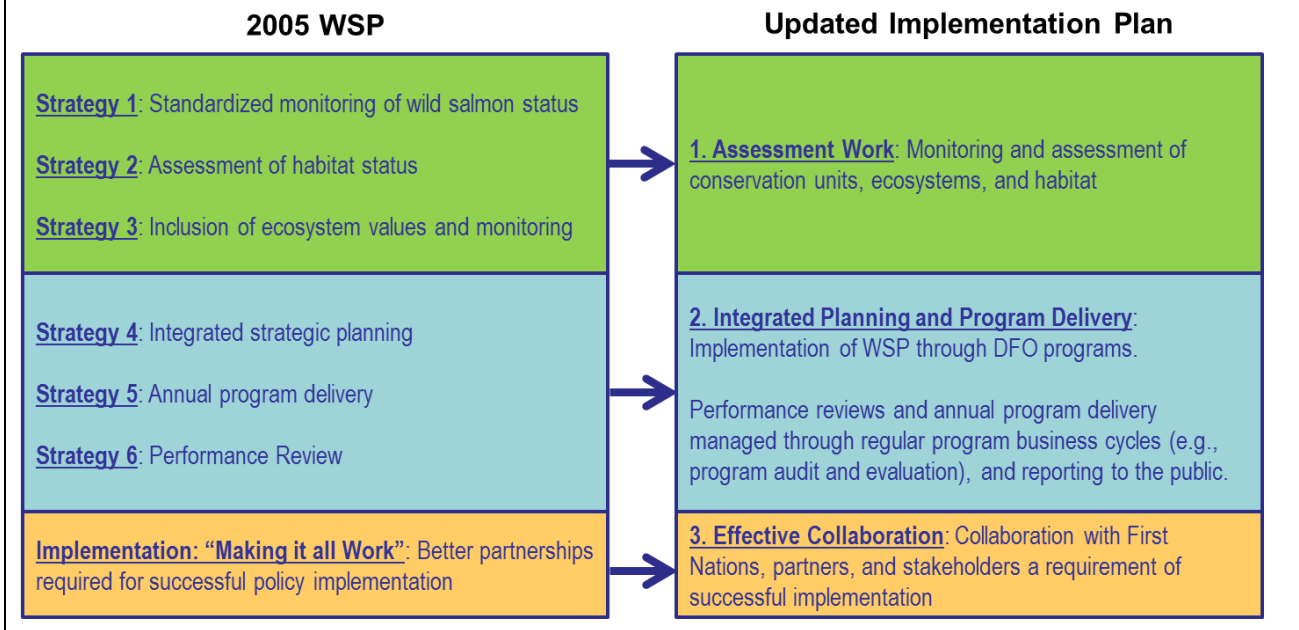
Why would the updated Implementation Plan use a new format, rather than retaining the original Strategies and Action Steps?

Much of the content in the 2005 WSP, including that relating to the Strategies and Action Steps, contains important information and guidance regarding conservation and sustainability of wild Pacific salmon. However, there are some challenges with the original Strategies and Action Steps including that they frame the WSP as a program unto itself and give the appearance of a siloed, linear approach to implementation. In order to address these challenges, to show alignment between the WSP and the ongoing day-to-day work of the Department, and to emphasize the need for more effective collaboration, work has been undertaken to reframe WSP implementation under three, integrative pillars (Assessment Work; Integrated Planning and Program Delivery; and Effective Collaboration). Implementation information and guidance from the 2005



WSP, which has proved to be important and useful over the past eleven years, would be retained and included within the updated Implementation Plan.

Figure 1: Crosswalk from 2005 WSP to updated, draft Implementation Plan



Who is accountable and responsible for WSP implementation?

The Regional Director General (RDG), as the most senior official in DFO Pacific Region, is accountable for WSP implementation. Regional and Area Directors, who report directly to the RDG, are responsible for implementation of specific activities and deliverables under the updated WSP Implementation Plan.

In consideration of recommendations by the Cohen Commission, as well as an independent review of the WSP by Gardner Pinfold in 2011, the governance surrounding WSP implementation will be formalized and strengthened, and details will be provided in an updated WSP Implementation Plan.

When will the WSP be fully implemented?

The WSP is one policy that guides the DFO’s work with respect to wild Pacific salmon. The policy goal, objectives, and guiding principles are enduring and implementation is intended to be ongoing through existing programs.

The updated WSP Implementation Plan (draft) would be an evergreen document, which would set out specific activities and deliverables with timelines and accountabilities. Annually, the Department would report out on implementation progress.

Implementation of the WSP is a long-term commitment, and it will never be “complete.” As long as there are wild Pacific salmon, DFO will need to implement policies respecting these species.



How will funding be committed by the Department to implementing the WSP?

The WSP is a policy, which guides programs but is not a program unto itself. Funding is committed to programs.

The updated WSP Implementation Plan will be developed based on current funding and resource levels, and any change in resource levels will be considered and may lead to further updates.

The Government has committed to a review of changes to the *Fisheries Act* to restore lost protections and incorporate modern safeguards. What impact will this have on the work being undertaken to update the WSP and develop an updated Implementation Plan?

A review of changes to the *Fisheries Act* is now underway, and the results may have implications for the updated WSP and updated Implementation Plan (draft), such as with respect to habitat- and ecosystem-related content. As the results of the review become known and if/when legislative changes are made and finalized, DFO will re-review the updated WSP and updated Implementation Plan and will make adjustments and amendments as necessary and appropriate.

What is the purpose of external consultations?

The Department acknowledges that DFO cannot implement the WSP on its own, which is why the updated Implementation Plan will emphasize the need for more effective collaboration with First Nations, partners, and stakeholders.

In initial sessions (commencing November 2016), DFO will be seeking to inform First Nations, partners, and stakeholders about work undertaken to date to update the WSP and develop a draft, updated Implementation Plan. DFO will also seek input regarding how best to work with and consult First Nations, partners, and stakeholders as development of the updated Implementation Plan progresses.

Once a draft, updated Implementation Plan has been developed for the purpose of consultations, DFO will seek to consult with First Nations, partners, and stakeholders on the contents of the plan and, in particular, how to develop more effective collaborations to help implement the WSP

When will the updated WSP and Implementation Plan be finalized?

It is anticipated that consultations with First Nations, partners, and stakeholders and work to update the Implementation Plan will be ongoing in 2017-18, after which DFO will work to finalize the document.