

MEDIA RELEASE

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Broad agreement across Maritimes that fishing rules should apply to all

HALIFAX, NS – Recent public opinion research conducted on behalf of the Unified Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFCA) by Narrative Research found broad agreement among Maritimers that fisheries regulations and commercial fishing seasons have been established with both conservation and sustainability in mind and need to be applied to all.

“We are encouraged to see our fellow Maritimers largely agree with us that DFO’s science-based rules need to apply to everyone in the fishery, whether they be Indigenous or non-Indigenous,” says Colin Sproul, President of the UFCA. Based on the survey results, Maritimers also strongly agree the fishing industry needs to be at the table for any consultations or negotiations between government and Indigenous leaders around changes to fisheries management.

“Our lobster fishery is one of the most sustainably managed and economically significant fisheries in the world in large part, because of the collaborative approach we have established with the government over the last number of decades,” says Sproul, adding the importance for industry to continue to have a voice in any discussions that involve proposed changes to the current regime.

The research found that:

- 80% of Maritimers completely or mostly agree that representatives for non-Indigenous fishers should be included in any consultations or negotiations between government and Indigenous leaders around changes to fisheries management.
- 73% of Maritimers completely or mostly agree that the established commercial fishing seasons and regulations should be enforced for everyone, including Indigenous and non-Indigenous fishers.
- 69% of Maritimers completely or mostly agree that there should be one set of integrated rules for all Indigenous and non-Indigenous fish harvesters, established by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

“The UFCA has always acknowledged the importance of cooperation with Indigenous communities, and that Indigenous fishers have a right to fish for commercial, food, social and ceremonial purposes,” says Sproul. “Our goal, first and foremost, is to work constructively with the government and First Nations communities to ensure the conservation and sustainability of the fishery for generations to come.”

About the Unified Fisheries Conservation Alliance

The Unified Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFCA) represents thousands of independent, multi-species commercial fishermen and women, fishery associations and associated businesses from across Atlantic Canada. The UFCA was formed to bring together many participants in the Atlantic fishery to speak with one balanced, coordinated and moderate voice.

UFCA engaged Narrative Research's Atlantic Quarterly, an independent, quarterly telephone survey of 1,100 residents of NS, NB and PEI, conducted from November 22- December 13, 2021. Overall results are accurate to within 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

For more information, visit www.ufca.ca

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