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## UFCA questions DFO's commitment to monitoring and enforcement

**HALIFAX, NS** – The Unified Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFCA) – an association of commercial fishery stakeholders – is surprised and frustrated by the recent statement from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) related to its commitment to provide adequate resources and equipment to enforce and monitor compliance in the lobster fishery.

Despite similar statements in the past, the subsequent disorder and enforcement issues surrounding the elver fishery exemplify why the UFCA, its members, and the fishing industry across the Maritimes are concerned about the future of the sector. Many constituents and communities rely on the fishing industry for their livelihood and economic growth, and threats to the long-term sustainability of these resources need to be taken seriously by all parties.

“We are strongly supportive of ensuring DFO has the resources necessary to properly enforce and monitor the lobster fishery,” says Colin Sproul, President of the UFCA. “Unfortunately, in past years, we have seen a lack of commitment by DFO senior management to ensure all stakeholders in the lobster fishery are abiding by the science-based management rules.”

For years, the UFCA's members across the Maritimes have seen flagrant violations of DFO's management regime by stakeholders in the lobster and fishery sectors. Our members have consistently called for additional monitoring and enforcement measures, with very limited results or action by the Department. Many examples of violations have been reported in the news, but others include:

- DFO awareness of illegal harvesting of elvers, with ineffective enforcement action taken.
- Illegal fishing gear and activity spotted and reported, with little to no action taken by DFO.
- Limited DFO enforcement of moderate livelihood and food social ceremonial (FSC) license conditions.
- Continuance of widespread illegal fishing, including in St. Mary's Bay and St. Peter's Bay.

The UFCA is committed to working with all partners in the Atlantic fishery. Unfortunately, without consistent enforcement and a willingness by DFO senior management to limit the well-documented illegal activities, the UFCA remains concerned that the conservation, sustainability, and economic viability of the Atlantic fishery is at risk.

For more information, visit [www.ufca.ca](http://www.ufca.ca)

**About the United Fisheries Conservation Alliance**

The UFCA represents thousands of multi-species commercial fishermen and women, fishery associations, and associated businesses in the Maritimes. The UFCA along with its partners in the fishery sector, are responsible for supporting over 25,000 jobs and contributing over \$3.8 billion in economic activity across Atlantic Canada.

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