

For Immediate Release - May 2, 2019

Harvester working group comments on Provincial Terms of Reference regarding proposed Northern Pulp effluent pipe.

NEW GLASGOW, NS – Fishing groups from Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Pictou Landing First Nation agreed some of their concerns were validated by the numerous conditions listed in the Focus Report - Terms of Reference released by the Province of Nova Scotia on April 23rd 2019.

After reviewing the 9-page document the groups credit the scientists with the Province of Nova Scotia for pointing out excessive data gaps in numerous sections of the Environmental Assessment (EA).

The terms of reference note significant data gaps in Northern Pulp's EA submission for a proposed effluent pipe, some of this missing data is central to understand the negative effects on the ecosystem.

Melanie Giffin, Marine Biologist with the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association, stated; "It's extremely disappointing to see an EA submitted with zero baseline studies and sparse detail on the chemical makeup of the effluent. It is critical that we know exactly what will be released into the Northumberland Strait and with no baseline study it is impossible to make comparisons down the road."

The harvester working group pointed out these gaps and others, in early meetings with Northern Pulp. Allan MacCarthy a harvester with Northumberland Fishermen's Association noted "These are things Northern Pulp should have been focusing on. The lack of data collection by Northern Pulp is not the fault of the harvesters or Pictou Landing First Nation. The responsibility lies solely with the company. They were given 5 years to collect the required data and failed to do so on their own accord."

Ryan MacDonald, a fish harvester with the Maritime Fishermen's Union expressed additional concerns. "As harvesters we have a strong relationship with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). We've asked them to look into the EA submission because we're worried about the health of the animals and to ensure the future of the stocks and a healthy marine ecosystem."

The working group maintains their strong stance of "No Pipe" in the Northumberland Strait and "No Extension" to the Boat Harbour closure date. The intervention of the Federal government in this review process and serious consideration of other technical options for the effluent are still being sought by the working group.

The lack of baseline data and the continued refusal of the mill to look at other technical options severely impact the ability for the mill and fishery to work out a go forward solution that will work for both industries.

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