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Intelligence

# Canadian government invests \$9.3 million in Indigenous commercial fisheries in British Columbia

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

## Funding allocated to 52 projects in British Columbia through the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative

On February 23, 2022, the Canadian government announced \$11.8 million CAD (U.S. \$9.3 million) in funding to support Indigenous commercial fisheries in British Columbia. The Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard Joyce Murray said the funding will be used to “support new business and training opportunities and increased fisheries access” for 31 Indigenous companies.

Funding will be funneled to 52 initiatives through the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI) – a program launched in 2007 that’s co-developed, co-designed and co-delivered in collaboration with Indigenous partners.

“Through the PICFI program, we are committed to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous communities,” said Murray. “By providing funding for 117 participating First Nations, these investments help to support local Pacific commercial fisheries and to continue our Department’s work to build



The Canadian government is investing (U.S.) \$9.3 million in Indigenous commercial fisheries in British Columbia. Photo courtesy of the British Columbia Salmon Farmers Association.

regenerative and prosperous fisheries in British Columbia.”

Funds will be used for a range of purposes, including the purchase of new equipment and vessels, expansion of kelp aquaculture operations and increase commercial halibut and sablefish quotas.



(<http://info.globalseafood.org/goal-2022-save-the-date>)

Funding will also support four new entrants in establishing commercial fisheries companies in the PICFI program, including the Gitksan, Wet’suwet’en and Gitanyow Nations; Klahoose and Homalco Nations; Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo Nations; and the Lower Fraser Enterprise Limited Partnership.



## In Canada, salmon farmers building social license with First Nations

After some rocky times, ties between B.C. salmon farmers and First Nations, have improved in recent years. Band members report consistent employment, royalties and improved quality of life. “We need aquaculture around,” says one fishing company owner.



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1

In 2019, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) released the Department’s Reconciliation Strategy along with an Action Plan for the Renewal and Expansion of Indigenous Programs. The Reconciliation Strategy was developed based on federal policy directions, feedback obtained through departmental engagements and consultations with Indigenous peoples and stakeholders. **[In a press release \(https://www.canada.ca/en/fisheries-oceans/news/2022/02/government-of-canada-invests-in-indigenous-fisheries-opportunities-across-bc.html\)](https://www.canada.ca/en/fisheries-oceans/news/2022/02/government-of-canada-invests-in-indigenous-fisheries-opportunities-across-bc.html)**, the Department said the funding is “consistent” with its Action Plan.

For a full list of the 52 initiatives to receive PICFI funding, **[click here \(https://www.canada.ca/en/fisheries-oceans/news/2022/02/government-of-canada-invests-118-million-in-indigenous-fisheries-opportunities-in-bc.html\)](https://www.canada.ca/en/fisheries-oceans/news/2022/02/government-of-canada-invests-118-million-in-indigenous-fisheries-opportunities-in-bc.html)**.

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