

## **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT BY THE BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS REGARDING THE STUDY ON THE MIGRATION OF LOBSTER AND SNOW CRAB IN ATLANTIC CANADA AND THE IMPACT OF CHANGES TO LOBSTER CARAPACE SIZE**

The Bloc Québécois would like to begin by thanking all the witnesses who appeared before the Committee during its study of the migration of lobster and snow crab in Atlantic Canada and the impact of changes to lobster carapace size. We also wish to note that we did not have the opportunity to participate in the study or in witness selection.

The Bloc Québécois supports all the Committee's recommendations in this report. However, it strongly opposes the fact that the report does not represent the Quebec viewpoint or the situation in Quebec. The purpose of this supplementary report is to include Quebec's concerns and develop recommendations that are both vital and complementary to the work of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

Specifically, aside from the fact that not a single witness from Quebec<sup>1</sup> was invited to speak on the issue under study, a review of the evidence shows that Quebec is mentioned there only four times and only as an offhand reference.<sup>2</sup> Quebec is mentioned in the report only three times and always indirectly – either in a remark or a bibliographic citation.<sup>3</sup> In comparison, Prince Edward Island is directly mentioned 24 times in the evidence<sup>4</sup> and 8 times in the report.<sup>5</sup> Yet the share of lobster and snow crab landings is higher in Quebec than in Prince Edward Island. The average annual value of landings for both species between 2014 and 2018 was \$220 million in Quebec and \$194 million in Prince Edward Island.<sup>6</sup> From a purely economic standpoint there is no reason why Quebec should be overlooked – it is a bigger player than Prince Edward Island when it comes to harvesting the two species.

This intentional oversight demonstrates the Canadian Parliament's disrespect for Quebec. Preventing Quebecers from helping to draft documents that could affect the procedures and legislation that apply to them is a blatant denial of democratic rights. As a direct result of Canada's systemic disinterest in the Quebec nation, Quebec is being even further erased from the federal decision-making process.

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<sup>1</sup> House of Commons, Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, *In Hot Water—Lobster and Snow Crab in Eastern Canada*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, June 2019, pp. 25–26.

<sup>2</sup> House of Commons, Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, *Evidence*, Meetings 139, 140 and 142, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3 April, 10 April and 1 May 2019.

<sup>3</sup> House of Commons, Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, *In Hot Water—Lobster and Snow Crab in Eastern Canada*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, June 2019, pp. 4, 7 and 15.

<sup>4</sup> House of Commons, Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, *Evidence* — Meetings 139, 140 and 142, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3 April, 10 April and 1 May 2019.

<sup>5</sup> House of Commons, Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, *In Hot Water—Lobster and Snow Crab in Eastern Canada*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament, June 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Fisheries and Oceans Canada, [Seafisheries Landings](#), consulted 6 March 2020.

In the case at hand, both Quebec's marine practices and the size of its fish resources are being ignored. The report overlooks the fact that Quebec's snow crab fishery is the second largest in Canada since 2015, the value of lobster landings has more than doubled in the past five years, and the average annual increase in lobster and snow crab landings since 2014 is higher in Quebec (22.7%) than in the Maritime provinces.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the report makes no mention of the significant changes taking place in Quebec's commercial fisheries. Furthermore, the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans has not informed itself about the issues specific to Quebec. Committee members are unaware that the lack of funding from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans prevents new lobster licences from being issued or that the department has very few indicators to evaluate the health of lobster stocks in zones 15, 16 and 18.<sup>8</sup>

All of the above-mentioned details should have been included in the report if the previous Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans had been interested in hearing evidence from Quebec. Many Quebec researchers, academics and stakeholders would have gladly shared their knowledge of fisheries and oceans with the Committee members. For these reasons, the Bloc Québécois will use its membership on the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans during the 43<sup>rd</sup> Parliament to ensure Quebec's interests regarding saltwater fisheries management are heard, understood, represented and respected.

In closing, the Bloc Québécois maintains that Quebeckers will always be best represented by other Quebeckers. The only way for the Quebec nation to be solely responsible for its collective future is through independence.

### **Recommendation 1**

**That the Government of Canada comply with the long-standing demands of the Government of Quebec and transfer its full authority over fisheries to Quebec, unconditionally and with full financial compensation.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**That Fisheries and Oceans Canada properly fund all of its area offices in Quebec so that they can adapt to rapid changes in fish resources.**

### **Recommendation 3**

**That Fisheries and Oceans Canada properly fund all of its area offices in Quebec so that they can adapt to climate change impacts on fish resources.**

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat, [Proceedings of the regional peer review meeting on the assessment of the lobster in Quebec's inshore waters in 2016](#), consulted 5 March 2020.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**That Fisheries and Oceans Canada develop and maintain the biological information needed for the sustainable management of lobster stocks in zones 15, 16, 17 and 18.**

#### **Recommendation 5**

**That Fisheries and Oceans Canada be transparent in the awarding of commercial fishing licences in Quebec.**

#### **Recommendation 6**

**That Fisheries and Oceans Canada be transparent in the implementation of conservation measures for Quebec's fish resources.**