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## **Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, March 13, 2008**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Fabian Manning**

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## Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

Thursday, March 13, 2008

•(0905)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Fabian Manning (Avalon, CPC)):** I call the meeting to order.

We have a quorum for witnesses, so we'll begin. Since we've been in anticipation of your arrival over the past number of weeks, we want to start and have plenty of time to pose some questions.

I'd like to welcome our guests. We almost think Mr. Bevan is part of the committee here after this week, but it's great to see you again, as well as Mr. Hegge and Ms. Dansereau.

I will give you the opportunity for some opening remarks, and then we'll open the floor up for questions. Once again, thank you for appearing here this morning.

The floor is yours.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau (Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Thank you.

Good morning, Mr. Chair and honourable members. I am actually very pleased to be with you today to get to know you better and to have you get to know me a little bit in my new capacity as associate deputy minister with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. I was going to introduce my colleagues, Cal Hegge and Dave Bevan, but as you said, you know them well.

They're here today because, as you know, I've only been in the department a couple of months and I don't pretend to know things that I don't know. So if there are specific questions on matters of interest to the committee for which I don't have answers, they will be able to help us get to those answers.

In my time at Fisheries and Oceans Canada I've been most impressed by the passion of your committee. I thank you for the constructive advice you have been offering, both in your current structure and over the years. It's been very helpful to the department.

My understanding is that I'm here principally to introduce myself to you and to bring life to the CV that you have in front of you.

[Translation]

I was born in Montreal and raised in Baie-Comeau. My father was a surveyor for Hydro-Quebec. He died when I was very young. So we returned to Montreal. I was educated as a scientist, and you will note from my experience that I have spent most of my professional career on the west coast, in British Columbia. During that time, I worked with resource-dependent communities, single-industry towns, essentially, primarily in the forestry sector. I worked with

people who relied on forestry for a livelihood and were facing significant changes in their industry. These were Canadians who were doing their utmost to deal with a fundamental shift in their economy in the 1980s and 1990s.

These shifts were brought about by new environmental practices, changing markets and demographics, and new pressures from many sources. In fact, many of the issues that fishing communities continue to face today are much like the ones I addressed in the forestry sector. I have extensive experience working with those communities.

I came to Fisheries and Oceans from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, where I was the Senior Assistant Deputy Minister of Socio-Economic Policies and Regional Operations. In that position, I was responsible for most of the on-reserve social programs south of the 60th parallel. The annual budget for my sector was over \$5 billion dollars, and I was accountable for the operations of the seven regional offices. Between the regions and headquarters, I was responsible for approximately 2,000 employees. I was also responsible for emergency management preparedness for the department.

I bring international experience with me, having served as Vice-President and Special Advisor to the President of the Canadian International Development Agency, and five years as Executive Director of CUSO, one of Canada's first and largest volunteer-sending organizations.

While at the Canadian International Development Agency, I was responsible to the President for developing a vision for a new priority branch, as well as its implementation. As the Executive Director at CUSO, I was accountable to the Board of Directors, the members and the donors for the quality of policies and programs. I was fully accountable for the financial soundness of the organization and its human resource management in a unionized and decentralized environment.

[English]

Prior to that I was deputy minister of transportation in British Columbia, after having served as vice-president of a crown corporation in charge of reinvesting in forestry communities.

As a provincial deputy minister I provided ongoing strategic and policy advice to the minister and cabinet on transportation and related policy and programming issues. I was accountable for all financial, administrative, and human resource management issues for the ministry. The ministry budget was \$800 million annually, with 2,600 staff situated around the province.

As the vice-president of operations at Forest Renewal B.C., the crown corporation of which I spoke, I reported directly to the board chair and CEO. The crown corporation was decentralized across the province, and I was responsible for the development of programs, the establishment of six regional offices, and province-wide formal consultation mechanisms for policy and program development. My budget was \$200 million per annum. I had 120 staff.

You can see from this list that I have spent a considerable portion of my career managing in a decentralized environment, experience that I think will serve us all well at Fisheries and Oceans. I am confident that the mix of experience and skills that I bring will serve me well in my new role, and hopefully will well serve the minister, the deputy, and the department.

● (0910)

[Translation]

As you know, there is no standard definition of the role of the Associate Deputy Minister nor is there a standard job description. As always, the Deputy Minister remains the accounting officer for the department and chairs its management committees. I am vice-chair to those committees and act in her stead, in her absence.

The Associate role is perceived as affording the Deputy Minister opportunities for workload sharing with the Associate. In turn, these opportunities provide the Associate with a chance to make significant contributions to the department, while rounding out some of their development needs.

I consider myself quite fortunate to arrive at Fisheries and Oceans Canada, as my duties are as I'd like them to be. They include direct management of key files, such as gravel extraction from the Fraser River, to complementing and supporting the leadership of our Deputy Minister.

In a department that concerns itself with a wide range of issues, from improving international fisheries governance to managing inland waterways, serving alongside this Deputy Minister promises to be as rewarding as it will be interesting.

[English]

I have begun visiting our department and coast guard operations. In fact, I spent the night of my last birthday aboard a coast guard icebreaker sailing from Amherstberg to Sarnia, Ontario. That's not how I planned on spending my birthday, but it turned out to be a fascinating experience and a great learning experience for me.

I realize marine safety is one of many key services we provide Canadians from coast to coast to coast. That trip certainly gave me pause to appreciate the breadth of Fisheries and Oceans' responsibilities across Canada and the importance of our work, from fisheries and oceans management and policy to aquaculture, science, and small craft harbours.

I also had the opportunity to accompany the minister and the deputy minister to the Boston seafood show recently, and I attended a meeting of the Atlantic Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers. I've had the pleasure of meeting many of the department's lead scientists at a national management meeting last month and in my travels.

In Boston I was afforded the opportunity to meet with many industry representatives and to hear them eloquently describe their reality. It was highly instructive for me.

I can tell you that everyone I've met at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans has been a true professional. As time permits, I will continue to visit our regions and operations. I'm planning to visit the department's regional offices in Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec in the very near future. In early April I will be visiting three arctic communities as part of the Inuit arctic tour. This program provides historic, economic, and social context to government officials whose work involves northern development.

All of this is to say that I'm sincerely looking forward to the opportunities and challenges ahead of me at Fisheries and Oceans Canada. I also look forward very much to working with this committee and to the guidance you will provide.

Thank you for inviting me today. I'm here to answer your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I'm delighted that you enlightened us about what you did on your birthday, because I was wondering what you did in your spare time.

We'll start with our ten-minute round of questions. Please go ahead, Mr. MacAulay.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.):** Mr. Simms is opening.

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** Thank you very much. You're very generous.

Ms. Dansereau, thank you very much.

I'm sure we could talk for hours, especially with the four members here from our party, because you seem to have an extensive background in forestry as well. We could go on and on. We have a lot in common.

I do want to say that it is pretty impressive, but I have a question. Did you say you haven't been to the Newfoundland and Labrador office yet?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** No.

I have a personal connection only in that I have a granddaughter, and her other grandparents are part from Newfoundland, part from Main-à-Dieu, Nova Scotia.

● (0915)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Really? We have connections everywhere. It's part of our world domination plan.

I do want to touch on an issue that is not specific to the east coast, but certainly is quite popular right now, which is of course the issue of combining and rationalization. What have you learned thus far about attempts for rationalization across this country in the fishery?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** As I'm sure you know, it's a very complicated issue. It's particularly complicated for somebody who comes from a different industrial sector such as forestry. I had a lot of experience with fisheries regulations when I was doing my forestry work, so I understand the regulatory environment as it applies to industrial development. But I admit I don't have a lot of experience on matters of combining or the inner workings of the industry itself and its various players, although I'm an active participant in the discussions and I understand that from the work that is happening right now in Newfoundland and Labrador there's a general satisfaction with the direction we are going on that. That to me is the main concern, that we protect the evolution of the industry and we protect the workers and the communities that are part of that industry. From what I can gather, based on my previous experience, we are going in that direction with this combining.

David can answer much more fully, but my sense is that there is general support for the direction in which we're going because it addresses certain needs within the industry.

**Mr. David Bevan (Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Clearly a number of fisheries in the Pacific have already gone to ITQ. In that situation the individual transferable quotas did result in adjusting the effort in accordance with the available quota and having more efficient use of the capital and labour in those fisheries. It did, however, have impacts on coastal communities in the west. In the east we do have enterprise allocations for the offshore. Again, that did result in a balance of the effort to the available resources for the offshore. Also, we have a number of ITQ and IQ fisheries in parts of the Atlantic. However, most of the Atlantic inshore fishery was conducted under the policy of maintaining core fishermen as the licence holders. That was designed to remove part-timers over time. As they left the fishery, their licences weren't transferable, so as they left, there would be a small reduction in the effort. But the core fishery policy did not allow one core fisherman to combine enterprises with another. It didn't allow one core fisherman to buy out the quotas of another, etc. The design of that policy was to maintain the employment and the effort in the coastal communities.

However, in the face of today's realities with the cost of energy, the dollar, and competition in China, etc., it has meant there's general consensus that we have to look at other ways of doing business. That's why the policy change announced April 12, 2007, was to allow fishing interests and fleets to consider ways they could combine enterprises. That's moved ahead in Newfoundland and Labrador with a policy that was designed there, after lots of consultations, to allow enterprises to be combined. Those discussions are going to take place in the rest of the Atlantic where those fisheries don't have individual quotas or transferable quotas to consider ways that we can combine.

The whole issue of preserving the independence of the inshore fleet in Atlantic Canada was designed to pull out from under the table all those trust agreements, etc., and put it all up top so we can

all have a good discussion of where we are now and where we want to go. If we want to have combining in the fleets, that will be up to the fleets to consider and to consider the kinds of rules they want to impose upon themselves.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** One of things touched upon in Bill C-32 to the new and improved version of the Fisheries Act was it addressed some of the issues brought up from when it was Bill C-45. Are you familiar with the changes made to Bill C-32? Can you justify each and every one of the changes that were made?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Are you asking me if I can justify each of them?

• (0920)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I'll ask all three of you.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** I am familiar with some.

There was a desire that there be a much stronger recognition of fisheries as a common property resource, and that's been done.

There was a desire that the minister must take into consideration certain things, rather than may take into consideration certain things, and that has been done.

And I think there was an expectation that there would be continued recognition of the importance of fishery to the communities, and that's been done.

So I think the work that I have seen—

**Mr. Scott Simms:** To the communities, was that the last point?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Through the common property component, there's a recognition that many things must be taken into consideration and therefore communities will benefit as a result overall.

I think what people said in the consultations has been reflected in the changes. At least that's my understanding. Both Cal and David could add some more.

**Mr. David Bevan:** We received many, many comments. We made changes where there was a consensus. As you see from the changes from Bill C-45 to Bill C-32, there weren't a great number, but those were the areas where there had been consensus from the interested parties, stakeholders, etc. The rest of the comments could be diametrically opposed. For example, there are people wanting to have the allocations almost take on the conditions or properties of property, and others don't want that to take place at all. We have differing views from one end of the spectrum to the other. We've reflected the middle view, if you will, in the changes that were made, and we think this is where we do have consensus on the changes from Bill C-45 to Bill C-32.

**The Chair:** Mr. Byrne.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.):** Thank you very much.

Ms. Dansereau, you spent a lot of time in international development agencies. Your work with CIDA I'm sure was very, very helpful to you and to our international development assistance efforts. With the WTO and the draft rules regarding fishery subsidies, there are specific provisions put in place for subsidies to be able to be provided to developing countries. One of the things that struck me, and I'm sure your time with the Department of Indian Affairs would highlight this, is there are absolutely no provisions for aboriginal first nations' new access to fisheries through subsidies in the WTO draft guidelines. Does that surprise you?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** It's an interesting question. No, it doesn't surprise me, really. As you know, and as we talked about two days ago, the sections we are dealing with are bracketed. It's an attempt by the chair to get the conversation going; that's my read of what's happening on that. No, it doesn't surprise me, because I think it's taking a look at the industries as they currently exist, as opposed to going into how countries may change their internal allocations. So no, it doesn't surprise me.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** You don't feel there's a threat to the aboriginal fisheries strategy.

As you're probably also aware, just about every country engaged in the fishery—the European Union, the U.S., Japan—has actually filed with the WTO a formal discussion paper or policy considerations that they raise as concerns. Canada has not. Nothing has been filed by Canada. Just about every other country has actually filed something, and you can find this on the WTO website, but Canada has nothing in place. Does that surprise you?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** I think those are questions that are best put to the people who have come to you before, and that would be our foreign affairs department. You've had representation from that department here to address that. As you know, the sections you're talking about are part of a much broader discussion, so Canada's position will reflect its position on all of those. I can't speak for the Department of Foreign Affairs and when and how it will put forward its papers.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I think my time is up, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** We'll be back to you, I'm sure.

Mr. Blais.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, BQ):** Good morning, Ms. Dansereau. It's a pleasure for me to see you. We nearly had to fight to get you to appear in committee for two hours, which made me lose my temper. I found it inconceivable that the legitimacy of such a request and the fact that the committee is master of its own agenda could be questioned. In that sense, that very much disappointed me. I got the impression that the department ultimately wanted to control the agenda of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, which is a committee of Parliament. And I can't accept that. That's the impression I got, since we've been wanting to meet you for quite a long time.

I said that at the outset, and I said it again, and I can look you squarely in the eye and say it again: we didn't ask you to appear in committee to conduct an inquisition, pick a fight or cast doubt on your appointment, not at all.

In view of what is currently happening and what could happen, I think it's important to have an opportunity to meet you in order to determine your administrative responsibilities and your vision of the fisheries file and to see how your experience could help you work through that. It's just that.

Consequently, I didn't at all appreciate the way the department reacted to your appearing for one or two hours. That's my first comment. Now matters are clear.

I've done some research on you to get a better idea of who we're dealing with, not to investigate you. I'd like to understand the path that has led you, with a certain enthusiasm, to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Your experience is quite different, in a different field. Earlier we talked about forestry and international work, in a way, with CUSO.

This isn't my case, but unfortunately people get the impression that Fisheries and Oceans isn't the most glorious department in the government. Some people aspire to work in the Department of Foreign Affairs, for example. That looks very good. Some ministers are no doubt very pleased to be in the Department of Foreign Affairs. Others may aspire to the Department of Defence.

How can we explain your enthusiasm for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans?

● (0925)

**Mme Claire Dansereau:** Thank you for that question, because it's very interesting. First, I apologize for being late.

It's true that it's sometimes hard to explain my career path. I see a very clear common theme running through it. When I decide to change jobs, it's because I've thought about it very seriously. Economic development in the rural regions is a passion for me. Forestry and transport inspire me as well. One of the reasons why I liked working in transport is that a good transportation system and a good road system are supports for economic development in Canada's rural regions. Forestry, transport and fisheries have common challenges, such as assisting the communities and individuals that want to work in the rural regions. There's a similarity for me.

It was somewhat the same thing when I worked internationally. I worked with communities in Africa and South America. They were also concerned about their own development.

Here's a little story that goes back to the start of my career. As you know, I studied microbiology at university. I am a microbiologist by training. My primary interest when I entered the public sector was... I knew that Canadians were extremely afraid of biotechnology. I thought it was important to get involved in developing rules for biotechnology. When I was in British Columbia, that work was being done in forestry. That's where I started my career in forestry. Now I'm very happy. A few weeks ago, I visited a lab in West Vancouver where they're working on biotechnology regulations. That was a return to the start of my career.

The department does a little bit of everything I'm interested in. In addition, as senior managers, the competencies and skills that we develop are transferable from one department to another. If you develop good, transparent management, good human resources management and good financial management, you can transfer that from one area to another.

I love the public service, and I love working in it. That's very important for me, and I could talk about it all day.

● (0930)

[English]

**The Chair:** We'll discuss it further the next time Mr. Blais asks questions.

Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** First of all, Madam, welcome to Ottawa.

As my colleagues indicated, your résumé is very impressive, and I congratulate you on that. I wish you the best of luck with DFO.

One of the concerns we have, of course, is getting information out to the fishermen in their communities in a timely fashion. I have three e-mails here that came to me in the last couple of days, and they're typical of what I get throughout the country on a regular basis.

Here's one from the Sportfishing Defence Alliance. It says that for 82 days now he's been waiting for one simple answer from a DFO official named Mr. LeBlanc. He hasn't gotten it yet, and he wants to know why.

Here's another one. Another gentleman in Victoria has been waiting for a long time on an answer regarding reinstating salmon enhancement programs—still no response, even though he's e-mailed, phoned, and the whole bit.

Here's another one that is quite disturbing, from the west coast troll fishery. It comes from Kathy Scarfo and Roy Alexander, who I'm sure Mr. Bevan would know. I'll just read it to you:

Last week, we were officially notified by the DFO negotiator on the Pacific Salmon Treaty that the U.S. had made an offer to eliminate our fishery for \$16 million. DFO lead negotiator informed us that they intend to return with a counter proposal that while not completely eliminating us would result in enough fish for only 6 of our 168 licenses. While in principle, we disagree with the elimination of our fleet, we have been warned by your officials that if we did not accept the buy-out as proposed, they would continue to reduce and eliminate all access to fish from our licensed fleet and we would be left with nothing.

I just can't see why DFO would operate in a manner of that nature. What I would like to do is to give you these—I know you're new here—and ask that you or your officials when you have a chance could call these individuals and give them the answers they're looking for. This particular one is most urgent. They're asking for a meeting with some senior officials, if that's possible.

The reason I do that is because that is consistent with what we get across the country. They send e-mails, they phone, they go to meetings; all they're asking for are basic answers, and they can't get them. I'm hoping that while you're here, being new blood in the department, you could shake the department up a bit and make them understand that if the taxpayer is looking for a response to a

question, even if it's not the answer they like, they should have it in a timely manner. Would you agree?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Yes, I do, actually. You have seen the movement of my career: I've been inside of government and I've been outside of government. I have been in provincial government. Outside of government I was in an NGO, and I know the difficulty of trying to access information, to get these people to even talk to you. I understand the difficulty of being faced with the bureaucracy, and I take it really seriously, as does the deputy minister and the minister. We have a minister who's very closely involved with the issues. We have a parliamentary secretary as well. I think there is absolute support for the notion that we need to be able to answer questions when they come up.

I don't think any department could ever be 100% perfect on something like that, because e-mails get lost or.... But if the systems are in place that allow it to happen, and if the philosophy is supportive of that type of response, then we should be able to satisfy most people. So I'll take your e-mails and I will look into those individual cases. But I can tell you that the department as it's currently structured is trying very hard to reach that. Obviously we can improve, and if it means even improving systems on just our general Internet site and things like that, we will do that as well.

● (0935)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Thank you.

On another issue, we had discussions before regarding the coast guard itself. It's probably unfair to ask you this at this time, but it's just something to reflect upon in the future.

A certain party that is in government now actually assured us that one of its goals may be the opportunity of the coast guard to be not a special operating agency, but a stand-alone agency. There's been a lot of talk, at least down on the east coast, about actually moving coast guard out of DFO and into the realm of, say, the public safety minister. Instead of Mr. Hearn, it would be Mr. Day.

Those discussions were when the Liberals were in power and also with the Conservatives, although nothing has really moved on it. It's just idle chat right now. We'd like to make the minister's life a lot easier, to give him less responsibility.

Is that something you would consider even looking at, in order to ensure enhanced safety and security measures, revamping the coast guard, not just for fisheries and environment and immigration, but also to aid in our security of our three oceans, to make it a stand-alone agency under a new minister, in this case the public safety minister? You don't have to answer if you don't want to.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** I'm not going to pretend to know the answer at all. I really don't know the answer to that question. I think it is something the coast guard and the commissioner of the coast guard need to put their minds to and the government of the day needs to determine.

For me, form always follows function. If we determine there's general agreement on the function, then where it's placed is a secondary question for me.

No, I won't say any more on that.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Fair enough.

**The Chair:** That's your time, Mr. Stoffer.

Mr. Kamp.

**Mr. Randy Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Dansereau, for coming. It's always a delight to welcome to committees on Parliament Hill somebody from Baie-Comeau, and having spent most of your adult life in B.C. is also a good thing.

I have one issue I want to raise with you, and then I'll pass it over to one of my colleagues. I understand from your comments that one of the files you've been given is the whole issue of gravel removal, particularly on the west coast. As you know, the Fraser River runs through my riding, so it's an issue I follow fairly closely as well. It's never without controversy in my riding and in the area.

When gravel extraction is done on the Fraser River, I think there are two things I'm looking for, and whether they can both be done at the same time I don't know. One is that DFO officials aren't overly obstructionist, that they're actually part of the process in a constructive way, but also that DFO is doing its job in terms of protecting fish and fish habitat. Some would think you can't remove gravel and do that.

I'm just wondering what your comments are on this, what your involvement is, and if you can comment at all on the gravel removal projects that are probably nearing an end. As I understand, the authorizations were for March 15 and perhaps to the end of the month. What can you tell us about the approach that DFO takes with respect to gravel removal in these projects in particular?

• (0940)

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Thank you.

For those who know the history, it's a very interesting situation. It's a typical resource quandary, because protection of fish has to be paramount to the department, but for the province there's a very real concern that, depending on how the snowpack melts in British Columbia, there can be flooding and there are many communities along the Fraser that could be affected by that flooding.

The province, at the moment, has situated gravel removal in the hands of its provincial emergency response program, PEP. My responsibility right now is to work with the provincial government and our people to help get us away from a crisis response to how this should happen and develop more of a long-term planning approach, which takes as its core the two fundamental requirements—that we remove the gravel in such a way that we ensure maximum flood

protection, while protecting fish to the maximum of our ability as well.

The link between flooding and the growth of gravel, because gravel keeps getting deposited every year, is not necessarily straightforward. It's a matter of picking those sites where there would be maximum benefit to the flood control program, recognizing that the bulk of the flood control program has to be the building up of the dikes and the other work the province has to do, but gravel removal has a certain role in it.

To answer the specific question, for this year the removals that were planned for this spring are almost complete, and now we're working on a medium plan for what needs to be done next January and then a long-term plan so that we don't have to deal with this on a yearly basis, out of fear of what may happen. As in all resource management, it ought to be on a planning basis, and that's the plan we're putting together right now. I think we're generally satisfied.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** So DFO does factor in, tries to address, the question of whether the gravel removal is actually going to address flood concerns.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** What we want to do is work with the province to determine.... First of all, for us it's fish protection first, and once we set that aside, we ask whether it's possible that there are areas that can also address some of the flood fears. Then we combine the two sets of considerations at the same time and in that way we reduce some of the fear around the flooding. We're not sure that there's a direct link as much as some say between the flooding and the gravel, but there can be some link, so any way we can help actually is what we intend to do.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Five minutes, Mr. Keddy.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's, CPC):** I would like to thank Ms. Dansereau for appearing at committee today. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

I look at this as an opportunity for the committee to get to know you a little better and for you to get to know us. Most times we're fairly civil to one another and the committee doesn't work too badly, but we never miss an opportunity to take a shot at the other team, so to speak. I wouldn't want to miss mine this morning. I do congratulate you on your new position, and I'm sure that bringing a fresh face to DFO, with all respect to Mr. Bevan and Mr. Hegge, is not a bad thing.

I have to pick up a little on the point that Mr. Byrne made on the WTO. I would expect that you would find it refreshing that finally we have a minister in charge of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans who has taken an issue that the Liberals hid very successfully for five years—and I realize you can't comment on politics and I appreciate that—and made sure no one knew who was at the WTO, and finally has allowed the sun and the air of the light of day to flow upon it. We now can actually do something about it, because it is a very important issue to all of us, on both coasts.



I'm sure Mr. Stoffer will get his press release out immediately on the three e-mails that he gave you today and be able to say that he has passed them right off and now they're looked after, and I appreciate that. But I do have two questions that have bothered me for my ten years as a parliamentarian, ones that have not been answered yet by the department or any government. I was hoping we would see some of this in the Fisheries Act, and it's not there. And that is, how we deal with the question of boat length and the fact that boat length no longer is there for safety reasons. It was an artificial measure put in to control the catch. Now that we've gone to ITQs, everything is in a quota system except the lobster fishery, and that is partially in a quota system because it's limited by the number of traps.

On the boat length, I have fishermen fishing out of Riverport, fishing out of small harbours in southwest Nova Scotia, who fish off of Georges Bank. They're out 180 miles offshore. There's something wrong with doing that in a 37-foot boat, because you can't have your lobster licence transferred from that 37-foot boat to a 45-footer or even a 50-footer. That's a safety issue that really I would like a fresh set of eyes to have a look at and maybe do something about.

The other thing that the ITQ system brought in was the ability to sell fish. We have far too many former fishermen who have used it as a retirement system, who no longer fish. Many of them don't even own a boat, have no intention of fishing, and yet they have 20 tonnes of haddock quota or they have cod quota and they're selling that quota to fishermen who want the fish. Those are issues we've been grappling with. I think the former government grappled with them. I know that the officials grapple with them. But we really do need to do something about that. And I realize that's not as simple as saying this is what we'll do tomorrow.

Do you have any thoughts on those two issues?

● (0945)

**The Chair:** A four-minute-and-20-second question gives you 40 seconds to answer.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Okay, good. That's very good, because that's about how much information I have on the answer.

What I will do, though, is take back the question and talk it over with Dave and do as you say, put a fresh set of eyes on it in the same way as I will on the communications questions.

So thank you for the question, and I can't pretend to have an answer.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy:** Okay, thank you.

And I wasn't too hard on you guys

**The Chair:** Thank you, once again.

We've gone through our first round. As we begin our second round, I know some people may be on medication and there are other reasons why they may be off to a rough start this morning. I just want to remind the committee:

The scope of a committee's examination of Order-in-Council appointees or nominees is strictly limited to the qualifications and competence to perform the duties of the post. Questioning by members of the committee may be interrupted by the Chair, if it attempts to deal with matters considered irrelevant to the committee's inquiry.

I was nice during the first round. My Irish blood will come out in the second round if you don't calm down. Thank you very much.

Whoever is next—Mr. Matthews.

**Mr. Bill Matthews (Random—Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** After that ruling, Mr. Chairman, I think I've been side-swiped, because my question had nothing to do with the associate deputy minister's qualifications or her bio or anything. It had nothing to do with that.

I can't help but say that after the minister was here Tuesday, and after hearing Mr. Keddy's remarks, we have nothing to worry about on the WTO issue. If anyone raises it in the future, I will tell them that the committee has been categorically told that it's under control and we don't have to worry about EI or financial support for infrastructure.

So I'm just letting you—

**The Chair:** Feel at ease on your break. Enjoy your break.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** I will.

So I can't ask a question that I couldn't ask Tuesday because we ran out of time with the minister, so now you're telling me—

**The Chair:** If the question has relevance to the appointment, I'm sure that Ms. Dansereau can feel free to answer. If I feel compelled that you're going outside the limits, I'll have to—

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Well, there's no doubt. Before I ask it, I know I'm outside of that boundary, Mr. Chairman.

I want to ask the associate deputy minister and Mr. Bevan about the recent transfer of quota between the Barry Group and Clearwater Fine Foods. Can you tell us how much quota was involved?

● (0950)

**Mr. David Bevan:** There was 1,900 tonnes of 0B turbot, which was the bulk of it. Most of the other fish went to Clearwater Fine Foods, approximately 1,600 tonnes. The rest went to a Newfoundland company.

It would be apparent that most of the groundfish quotas held by the Barry Group are being eliminated and transferred to other companies. They're asking us to make those transfers take place, so virtually all of Barry's groundfish quotas are being asked to be transferred to other enterprises.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Could you inform the committee what dollars changed hands on this transaction?

**Mr. David Bevan:** No, I can't. I don't know that answer. The minister is not aware of that either.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** How do we find out, then?

**Mr. David Bevan:** That's a matter between the various companies.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** So the department would have no concern whatsoever about the dollar value that changes hands on a common property resource such as this.

**Mr. David Bevan:** The practice on enterprise allocations, as we have had for the last 30 years, is that we would evaluate the request to transfer the quota from one company to another based on the policies that are administered by the department and approved by the minister. Those policies are that the company receiving the quota has to be qualified to do so and to fish it. Anything that happens between the companies is between the companies.

That policy was put in place as we made significant decisions, for example, on 2J3KL cod. The first 115,000 tonnes go to the inshore and the remainder would be shared between the inshore and the offshore. And those kinds of quota shifts that we made in the past to give portions of the quota to the offshore occurred because they didn't have as much as they had in the past and they needed the opportunity to be able to fish it economically, and that's what we've allowed them to do.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** I saw a recent letter to your minister from the Newfoundland and Labrador fisheries minister, Minister Rideout, expressing concern about this transfer. He talked about adjacency, dependency, and I believe at one point in one part of the letter he mentioned some concern about Bill C-32. I think they felt some comfort in Bill C-32, that this type of thing wouldn't happen.

I know the minister has to respond to the other minister. But what do you think off the top about Minister Rideout's concerns?

**Mr. David Bevan:** I think I'll have to leave that to our minister to respond. Certainly Bill C-32 is now drafted in a way that the minister, if the bill is passed in its current form, must consider adjacency, historical attachment, etc. The same concerns have been expressed by the ministers from Nunavut as well, so those concerns have been expressed and they will be responded to by the minister.

Certainly the current act allows absolute discretion to the minister, without any process, without any considerations being required in law. And those decisions can be taken very rapidly by the minister of the day.

The new act would provide a much more transparent process and one that would be more readily understood by the people involved in the decision.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Do I have more time, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** I'm probably being unfair to push the issue with you. I wanted to do it with the minister on Tuesday, but of course we ran out of time.

In light of where we are with Bill C-32, you'd think that in making this decision, or maybe not making it, the minister would have said that in Bill C-32, here's where we're aiming to get, so why would I go do this at this point in time? Do you know what I'm saying?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** It may—

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** It seems a little funny to me. If you were overly suspicious, you'd say we'll get it done before Bill C-32 becomes law. But I'm not suspicious.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** The minister has spoken a number of times on this, and he does take into consideration those items that he would take into consideration, I think, under Bill C-32, which are adjacency and also history.

The decision he made in this case was within an existing industrial structure, so between two companies that currently exist within the fishery, I think that was right. His consideration was therefore given to the historical attachment more so than to the adjacency attachment to Nunavut, which was where the debate was. He weighed both factors in this case.

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Are there any more questions?

Mr. Byrne.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** One of the key differences, Claire, would be that under Bill C-32 the minister's decision, if it were enforced today, would actually be challengeable under law. In other words, an intervenor could bring it before a federal court and have the court adjudicate as to whether the minister's decision was appropriate or not. Is that correct?

• (0955)

**Mr. David Bevan:** Yes, it would be subject to judicial review of the decision relevant to the considerations that the minister is obligated under the law to take into consideration.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** I want to follow up on a comment made by Mr. Stoffer. Your reaction to Mr. Stoffer's comments, Claire, was that open access to information.... We heard testimony from the deputy minister just a few days ago about the small craft harbours program and the decision-making process involved. What we heard very specifically was that—I'm aware of this because of course as a former political assistant myself, I was involved in the management within the minister's office of the small craft harbours program—the department sends forward information to the minister, proposals for his consideration and sign-off. They send it in a batch, both minor capital and major capital, as well as delegated authority to the regions to spend on operations and maintenance and other issues.

We heard from the deputy minister that the minister has received the package, has signed off on the package, and the decision-making is largely done, with the exception of a small number of projects for which additional information may be required. We heard specifically from the deputy minister that the decisions are now taken and it's up to the minister to choose when to announce the projects. So the decision's been taken. It's now a question of announcements.

In your experience in dealing with a \$5 billion department—you've obviously been involved in contracting and other things—have you found it important to get that information out as soon as possible so that the contracting process, the call for tenders and other things, could occur in as timely a fashion as possible so that expenditures could occur in the fiscal year in which they were approved? Has that been your experience in the past, and when it's not announced in a timely fashion, that sometimes that does cause certain problems of fiscal management from within the department's various votes?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Certainly getting things out early is always helpful. Whether or not departments or provincial ministries or even municipalities are able to do things in a timely manner is always difficult. There are always considerations and other priorities that come into play.

So in general, yes, the answer is the sooner the better, obviously, if decisions are made. But as you know, having been there, there are always other things to take into consideration, so it doesn't always happen the way it should.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne:** Have you anything further to add on that?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** No. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Before we begin Mr. Blais's time, I made a mistake, but the mistake is made now.

I went to do a complete second round following our first time of ten minutes, seven minutes, five minutes, ten minutes. I started ten minutes again with the Liberal Party and I realized that the second round was supposed to be all fives, but I've started ten minutes now, and I've decided that we're going to do a complete second round—ten, seven, five, ten, and then we'll start with our fives. Mistake made, mistake announced, and we'll move on. No vote, democracy.

Mr. Blais.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** I'm going to take the floor, Mr. Chairman.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Lévesque, sorry.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** Thank you.

Ms. Dansereau, we've had the opportunity to meet on a number of occasions. The reputation and people skills of people from the North Shore make it easy to pick them out.

I was wondering whether Dansereau Consulting and Facilitation belonged to the North Shore Dansereau family.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** No. Dansereau Consulting and Facilitation was me, and it was only on the west coast. It's true that the Dansereau family is quite a large family in Quebec.

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** I definitely won't ask you whether you believe that the deforestation of the St. Lawrence River banks is responsible for declining cod stocks. You'll never admit that; that's for sure.

•(1000)

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** No.

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** I hold a labour relations advisor's diploma, and I've rarely held the same job for a number of years. I've been a business executive on occasion, and it was the same thing. Moreover, I had a job offer from Iron Ore, in your corner of the country, which I turned down because I didn't feel I was able to work for a long time in the same field.

I wonder whether you too aren't that kind of person, because you've never worked in the same place for more than four years. There are people like that. After two or three years, since they evolve

quite quickly, they may think that their work is advanced enough for them to be able to go and work in another area. Others are too nice with their employees and, after four years, they feel they won't have as much control and that they would be better advised to leave room for others.

I wonder what category you fall into. To date, your employees see quite satisfied to work with you. It's up to you to tell us whether you would like to change fields in order to be useful elsewhere.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** First, my longest job wasn't for four years. I believe the shortest lasted five years. You can change jobs within the public service, but it's still the same employer. So in the provincial government, it was longer than four years. However, I held one position for five years that I knew, when I started, would not last any longer. I thought that, in personal terms, you could only do that kind of job for five years. The federal government is changing, and we have to change.

I believe the purpose of your question is more to determine my way of governing and the kind of manager I am. I must admit that all my employers were very disappointed when I left, and my employees as well, but that wasn't because I was too soft. My demands are quite high, but I provide employees with a very significant degree of support. I take them and their personal lives very seriously. At the British Columbia Ministry of Transport, there were approximately 2,600 employees, and I knew virtually everyone's name and background when I left.

I take the job of human resources manager very seriously. I think that all those who go to work in the morning should feel that their work environment is energizing. They don't necessarily always have to be happy and smiling, but the work should at least be energizing. It is somewhat my responsibility as a manager to be sure that they play a part in what we develop together. I take human resources seriously, and financial management as well. As I said earlier, I take that very seriously. I work in a professional manner, because I also think it's important at times to change environment.

When I left British Columbia to come to Ottawa, it was also for personal reasons, which we don't need to discuss here. It was the right time to do it. My daughter was at a certain age, and she was on the east coast. So I wanted to move back toward the centre.

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** I would like to go back to the department's business. Someone quite dynamic and, I would say, opportunistic, is needed. You have to be a bit opportunistic to be able to support the position of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, as I see it, in the negotiations being conducted at the WTO.

I would like to know your vision of things, in view of the current position of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in the context of those negotiations. How do you see that, in view of where we are now and the time left before the present negotiations expire?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** I know that Fisheries and Oceans employees, who are working very closely with their colleagues in International Affairs, take these discussions very seriously. They are deeply aware of the importance of these issues. I can tell you very sincerely that no one will be closing his eyes on that subject. We are all aware of what is at stake. I am sure that Canada will be well represented. The interests of Canadians who depend on our industry will be well represented in the context of those discussions.

•(1005)

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** I sense that my colleague is dying to ask some more questions. So I'm going to give him part of my time.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Thank you, dear colleague. Yes, I'm dying to do it.

In view of what you've just said, I'd like to know what role you'll play in the discussions on the WTO file.

[English]

**The Chair:** You wanted five minutes. I've given you seven. Your time is up.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** My time is up.

**The Chair:** Feel free to answer.

[Translation]

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** As I said earlier, the role of associate deputy minister varies a little with the department and the relationship between the deputy minister and associate deputy minister. In our case, we work in very close cooperation. We often attend the same meetings; we talk frequently.

As you know, Ms. d'Auray has a lot of experience on the matters we're talking about, and that's in addition to my own experience. So there's really another pair of hands, another pair of eyes and another pair of ears. That makes it possible to ensure that files are not set aside. We are both occupied by these issues. Our role is always to support the minister and the department. So we'll be working in very close cooperation on this matter and on a number of others. I'll have responsibility for managing certain files, but that will always be based on the deputy minister's accountability.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kamp is absolutely right when he says the gravel extraction on the Fraser would be contentious no matter which way you go, and I wish you good luck on that problem.

One of the concerns, as you know, in the last meeting we had was that Mr. Bevan had indicated that if the 2008 runs coming up the Fraser are not as productive as we would hope they would be, there may be some reduction to the aboriginal food, social, and ceremonial amount that they receive. I would assume that also means less sport-fishing opportunity and less commercial fishing as well.

I can see the argument now. The first question should be this. When do you anticipate, all things considered, extraction of gravel to begin on the Fraser?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** The extraction is ongoing right now. It's almost done.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** On all aspects of it?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** For this year, yes.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** For just this year. Is there anything anticipated later on?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** For the summer, no. It has to happen at certain water levels.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** When those extractions were being done, were first nations people included in the discussions, that you may be aware of?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** I don't know. I think those discussions would have happened before I arrived. I'm not sure what the planning went into for the two, the Hamilton Bar and the Spring Bar, for this coming year. I don't know what the conversations were last year. I know that obviously their fishery would have been taken into consideration, and really our goal and our role in the permitting of this is to protect the fishery in all of its elements. That has to be our first consideration. Clearly, if human life is at stake, then we have to do some reconsideration, but we don't believe that it is at the moment.

What we're trying to do is to get away from those kinds of emotional conversations that happen at crisis times and get into a planning process that allows us to make that dual determination of protection of life and property and protection of the fish.

•(1010)

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** My next question is to Mr. Bevan.

Sir, when do you anticipate any kinds of discussions with the various fishing groups on the Fraser regarding any possible reductions?

**Mr. David Bevan:** Those are under way.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** They're under way now.

**Mr. David Bevan:** We have to have obvious discussions with first nations relevant to food, social, and ceremonial. The projections for this year have already been made public through our forecasts for 2008. The specifics on how to manage the fishery are part of the ongoing discussions that lead up to the integrated fish management plans that are announced later in the spring, and then of course we have to see what actually comes back, but the projections certainly aren't for good runs. This is the low cycle, and the escapements in 2004 were low on that cycle. We've seen significant problems in the ocean environment, where the entire population seems to have been eliminated in 2005. The fish that were out there at that time are gone. So we'll have to see what happens this year.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Would those discussions also include our American counterparts as well? Would they be reducing their amounts as well?

**Mr. David Bevan:** They're obviously under the Pacific Salmon Treaty. That would have a bearing on their catches as well. If we don't get any, they are not going to be in a position to take fish not caught by Canadians under the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Very good. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen.

**Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Thanks, Chair.

Thank you for being here today.

I have a few questions.

In looking at your background, Ms. Dansereau, in the forest industry and some of the consulting you've done, I guess I could turn this into a natural resources committee here before we're done. I'd just like to talk to you about the experience you're bringing and the impact that forest operations have on watercourses and lakes.

In my riding there's some discussion about clear-cutting a significant section near a lake. While the decision to do that is a natural resources and provincial decision, using your experience, where do you think DFO's input on that is? What input would you have in the ultimate decisions on that practice with respect to the long-term health of that lake?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Some of my knowledge on those files is a little dated. I will refresh my understanding as I work in this department, but having done very similar work in looking at fish-forest interactions in my previous work, I know that there's a significant role for DFO. I actually used to spend some time teaching changing environmental practices in logging camps, and one of the things I taught was something called fish-forest guidelines, which were how to manage forestry operations and design logging plans while taking into consideration the impacts on fish, and what role the department would play on that in particular.

There is an interaction. The department does have a role to play. I'm not sure in that particular case what that would be, but I know that we do have some say in any possible impact that any operation would have on fishing or fish.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** Could you see that, as in one of the comments you stated before, as a direct management of key files? We talked about gravel extraction as being one, but would you see the others, the interprovincial relationship and the inner relationship between natural resources policy and DFO policy, as being one of those potential key files?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** It hasn't come up, but it's an interesting question, and I thank you for it. I suspect that it will go into the mix. Thank you.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** My next question is around wild species. I know DFO has recently met with New Brunswick Power Corporation with respect to the issue of downstream passage of salmon smolt on the Saint John River system in New Brunswick.

One of the questions I'd like to ask, and maybe Mr. Bevan can answer it as well, is what is the department doing with respect to company accountability? I know in a lot of cases there are fish ladders going upriver, but there's nothing to prevent the mortality of downstream smolt coming down the river. What are some of the types of things that you see the department doing in the long term to help with those kinds of things and hold these companies accountable for that?

•(1015)

**Mr. David Bevan:** The Fisheries Act is a powerful tool as regards the fish habitat and actions to protect fish. We obviously like to work

collaboratively with companies, and it's not just salmon but it's also American eel and other species that are of great concern. And mortalities in the turbines, etc., are a significant issue. We have been working with them through the provinces as well to try to reduce mortality. There are accountabilities, but I think the first step is through a collaborative approach and dealing with it that way before we turn to other tools.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** The minister commented the other day that we're trying to do as much research and find out as much information as possible, because what's happening in the river system is probably not the only reason for mortality; there's also probably something else happening. The sea lice is one, and then there are probably high-seas issues as well.

Do you see it as an issue that the department, at least on the local side, can take every possible action with companies to ensure that we can at least look after the river side of it?

**Mr. David Bevan:** We are doing that. It's really a complex issue. If you look at the Bay of Fundy alone, that's certainly a significant issue, but across both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts we have seen marked declines in survival at sea. In the Pacific there's been collaborative work with the Japanese and other nations that share that ecosystem with us focusing on oceanographic conditions and the impacts on salmon. On the Atlantic we've worked with the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, NASCO, the RFMO that looks after salmon in the North Atlantic, and we have worked on SALSEA, which is the salmon at sea program. We have provided a great deal of support to that in terms of ship time and scientific time, but the real question is what's happening at sea. If we focus on something like the Bay of Fundy, we could say let's look at the Saint John River, let's look at the local ecosystem, or whatever. But the bigger question is why salmon are not surviving in the marine environment the same way they used to. That study is going to take some time, and it's taking lots of international cooperation to get the resources we need focused on it.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** At the risk of inciting your Irish temper, I'll hand it over to Mr. Kamp.

**The Chair:** Mr. Kamp.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** I do have a general question for you, Ms. Dansereau, but before that, I hope you can help us clarify—pardon the pun—something that's been raised already, both in this meeting and I think in a previous meeting. The recent small craft harbours announcements that were made in Nova Scotia would be 2007-08 funding, if I understand, and we would not be ready to release the 2008-09 projects that are being suggested here because the budget isn't completely through the process. Is that right, as far as you know?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** That's correct. Thank you for that clarification. What we had talked about on Tuesday was the previous plan, and the one coming up is not yet finalized, nor is it in the minister's office.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Okay.

I thank you for the latitude, Mr. Chair, but within the bounds, let me ask this question. Even for somebody who gets to work from time to time with the bureaucracy, it's a little unclear to me what an associate deputy minister does. I think I understand what assistants do. They have their line-up of responsibilities, both Mr. Bevan or Mr. Hegge or others. Can you tell us just a bit more what your job description is? You've talked about particular files and you've talked about complementing the minister. I assume that means more than she's wearing a nice dress today. Are there people who report to you? Do you have a line that reports to you? That's my question.

•(1020)

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Thank you for the question. It is an ever-perplexing question, even for those who sit in the seat. I think you've all met associate deputies before.

As you know, departments are very large, very complex, very high stress, and very demanding. The myriad of files that any one person can look at on a given day is phenomenal.

The associate deputy does not have a particular, specifically written job description with line responsibilities in the same way as an assistant deputy minister does. We have what is commonly known as "two in a box". It's a box of deputies that has the senior deputy minister, the deputy minister, and the associate deputy minister. We complement—with an "e", not an "i", although sometimes we do the other too—each other in terms of our knowledge and our abilities. It really is about workload sharing, as I said in my introductory remarks.

Each mix of associate and deputy will reach its own conclusions on how best to divide up those tasks. In some departments it does almost result in a set of line functions. In other departments, it never does. It's about which files should we hand off right now because they need particular attention, and that would shift, as it should shift. It's about development opportunities as well for the associate as they come up through the system.

In our case we've decided that it will be about specific files. I will be looking at and managing in terms of general specifics, if I can say that, the executive services and how to keep that all straight, and the values and ethics component of the department. Those people will report directly to me as well.

On the issue of executive services, clearly in any department it requires constant refreshment on how it's done, as governments change. I have recently done a review of the correspondence systems. I did that when I was at Indian Affairs and I will do that here as well—how best to serve people as they write in to make sure that we actually get responses out in time and that type of thing. Your questions are well placed in that regard.

So it's the executive services and support to the minister in that way, specific files, and overall workload sharing with the deputy.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Kamp.

Mr. Simms, for five minutes.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

This is a question for all three, but, Ms. Dansereau, I'll start with you on this one.

On oceans management, of the five major ocean areas I've received quite a bit of input from the PNCIMA, which I'm sure you're familiar with, given your experience with the west coast.

PNCIMA talked about how there seems to be a lack of a grand vision as to what our oceans management strategy is today. They talked about how many of the projects are being siloed into different areas, and I speak specifically of the marine protected areas. Within these areas, obviously, we have some troubles with stakeholders and how they feel about how the marine protected areas are working, but their problem is an overall strategy because it lacks an overall vision.

Given your experiences with PNCIMA, and maybe you've had experiences through your work in the forestry as well, because lately there's been a pine beetle issue and how it is going to affect the oceans and forestry, I want to know how you feel about this particular file and how you see the vision of the current strategy of our oceans management.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Thank you for the question.

I know that management at PNCIMA is a must in the vision, as it's currently written, of bringing the parties together to design something for it. I agree. I also understand, because I know British Columbia well, that it won't be easy to do that, to bring various parties together. The minister has met often with the oceans people from British Columbia, from the Suzuki Foundation and the other NGOs. I think people recognize that this will take time to pull together. I think everybody shares the view that it's a necessity, but it's not going to be easy.

Yes, I will be following it with great interest, obviously, as I will all the others. Anything that is a stakeholder consultation process, just by personal interest, I'm going to pay close attention to.

•(1025)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** One of the things they mentioned was how there was such a lack of designated protection areas within our ocean strategy—I mean, really staggering amounts. We're talking about less than 1% when it comes to our oceans, and that goes for the three ocean areas on the east coast—Placentia Bay and St. Lawrence and ESSIM. You juxtapose that with the strategy for land protected areas, such as Canada Parks and these areas, and the numbers are quite staggering.

If you compare our record with places like Australia or New Zealand, our ocean protected areas really are minuscule compared to what they've done. This is mostly what we get from the NGOs.

Would you agree or disagree? Do you think the dynamic is changing here?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Definitely the dynamics are changing. I don't know if the percentage is right or wrong. I know that the percentage on the land side was subject to years of debate, back and forth, give and take, analysis of function, analysis of need, and analysis of social impact. We must take social impacts into consideration as we make these decisions.

It's that old Brundtland report approach to things that's still, in my mind, valid. We still need the three pillars, because if you don't protect the environment, you don't protect people, and if you don't protect people, you're not protecting the environment.

That still has to be central to whatever the decision is. Rather than picking a percentage to say that's our goal, I think we need to determine what the needs are and, as governments always have to, balance the priorities, balance how we manage these things in the same way as we will manage gravel extraction in the Fraser—what are the basic needs that we have, and how do we best achieve those?

I have no idea if the percentage, as it currently exists, is the right one. I know that these things are going to require, probably for the next 100 years, give and take on the part of the people who have an interest in those questions.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Do I have two minutes?

**The Chair:** You have ten seconds.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Very quickly, I recently met with a group called One Ocean, which is very concerned about the proliferation of the industrial capacity. Newfoundland is a perfect example, the south coast, in our chair's riding. I suppose you'd call it the imposition of the industrial sector vis-à-vis natural gas and oil. And one of the things they're calling on is a greater ocean management strategy in regard to the potential of a disaster like this.

**The Chair:** Using my riding doesn't give you any more time, so clue up your question.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I'd like to get your comment on that.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Certainly.

We have, and the minister has, met with One Ocean as well. Again, it's exactly the same type of consideration. Governments need to balance the priorities, balance the needs, balance the requirements, to make sure that we achieve a result that is sustainable into the future.

Whether or not they have the right answer, I don't know. I know that we're working with them and we will continue to do so.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Simms.

Mr. Blais, for five minutes.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Thank you very much.

Ms. Dansereau, I'd like you to tell me your intentions regarding the rural communities and the fisheries. I wouldn't dare ask you for an action plan now, but I would like to know whether you will favour much closer relations between the department and the rural communities.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** From what I see right now, our employees in the regional offices and subregional offices are working very closely with the communities, with the people of the small harvesters industry. If there's a shortage, closer relations should be achieved on that level. These people work in the same environments. We're working very closely with these employees. My vision, if I could have one for the department, would be to reinforce that aspect.

To date, I find that our employees take their responsibility for working closely with the rural community very seriously. Of course, we may not always have the time to do everything people would like to see us do. The fact remains that my role will be to oversee, ask questions, set challenges and see that things continue to get done in this way. I think our employees are in a very good position to take on this task.

• (1030)

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** My question doesn't concern employees in the local offices so much as it does senior management or management with regard to the rural communities.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** The deputy minister travels, of course. Having an associate deputy minister gives the deputy minister, or an associate deputy minister, the opportunity to travel, since someone stays at home. So I always act in her absence. That gives her the chance to travel more and to meet with the communities, and the same is true for me. We can do that because there are two of us.

That will open the door to this kind of travel, to the possibility of meeting with people and spending time with them. On the other hand, we definitely can't do other people's work. We can show up and listen, but the day-to-day work is done by our employees in the regions.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Earlier you mentioned that you intended to go to Newfoundland and Quebec. I'll let the people of Newfoundland ask the question for Newfoundland, and I'm going to focus more on Quebec.

I'm not necessarily wondering what the purpose of the travel will be, but rather what people you are going to meet, where you will go, how much time that will take, and so on.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Three days ago, I talked with the people in our Quebec office about that very thing. We started planning. I'll wait until they tell me what they think I should see. I'll definitely meet Quebec government officials. We're going to find the best places to visit communities, because it's part of my nature to do that. I'll definitely spend time on that. Personally, I'd like to go to Baie-Comeau, but I don't believe I'll go. I'll go and visit the place where needs seem the greatest, so that people can talk to me.

So I don't yet have those answers.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** I could make a lot of suggestions to you.

**Mme Claire Dansereau:** Yes.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** My riding is big, and Quebec's coastal regions as well. Moreover, I'm just getting back from a tour on that matter. In that sense, I think it would be important... I would be disappointed to learn that you went to meet with senior departmental officials in Quebec City. I would be disappointed to hear that.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** That's not how it's going to be. In professional terms, I know British Columbia better than any other part of the country. I've seen all the small communities there. I've spent time in those communities. I can't say the same for Quebec or the East. My intention is to get a better idea of the real issues. So I'm going to travel much more extensively in Quebec.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Thank you.

Madam, you had also indicated that you're going to Nunavut. Do you know specifically where in Nunavut you'll be going?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** I didn't organize this trip, but it's one that the ITK, Mary Simon's group, puts on every year for senior officials to visit the north. It is their trip. They organize it, and I will follow along. It's designed specifically for senior officials to get to know the real issues for the real people of the north. When I was at Indian and Northern Affairs I didn't spend any time in the north because my responsibilities were clearly demarcated as south of 60 degrees. I don't know the issues in northern Canada as well as I would like to, and so this is a good chance to learn.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Good for you for doing that.

One of the recommendations I would make, if you get the possibility, is to meet with the hunters and trappers organization that is very involved in the fishery. Mr. Bevan knows that very well. Most people, when they travel to Nunavut, go to Iqaluit. If you can get a chance to go the high Arctic and Arctic Bay, where fishing concerns are just starting to emerge, that would be very helpful for them to at least know that they have an ear at DFO in that particular regard.

Also, in your forestry background, you mentioned your concern about the environment and protection and trying to match economic opportunities with protection of the natural waterways. One of the concerns we have, and Mr. Bevan knows this quite well, is regarding the mining effluent act, schedule 2, where some companies have permission to use vibrant, healthy lakes as tailing ponds. We had that example in Newfoundland and we have it now in Nunavut coming down, and there are scheduled lakes across the country that are slated for destruction as well.

I'd just like your viewpoint on that, or if you haven't had a chance to study that yet, you could come back at a later time.

One of the concerns we have is that mining companies, we believe, should have independent, separate tailing ponds, free and clear of any natural waterway. This act allows them in some circumstances to actually use those lakes as their tailing ponds, which causes quite a concern for a lot of environmentalists and fishermen.

My last question is for Mr. Hegge.

Sir, what do you see as your role in working with the new associate minister as we go down the road?

•(1035)

**Mr. Cal Hegge (Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources and Corporate Services, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** I

look forward actually to working very closely with her. Already in the short time she's been here, and she alluded to this, there have been some important files that I'm involved in because I have quite a breadth of responsibilities, as you're aware, including small craft harbours. So Claire and I are working closely on a number of files that I have. She's offered her assistance, given her background, etc., and I'm going to take advantage of that.

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Thank you.

I don't know the specifics of the act as you're describing it, but I do know that the department has a very significant role in all major project approvals. Where there's going to be an impact on fish or habitat, then obviously there's a whole other government process with the Environmental Impact Assessment Act.

My sense is that these questions should and will be viewed each on a case-by-case basis, each on the basis of what impact will that particular activity have on that habitat next to it, so again that should never change. We should always do these on a case-by-case basis.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** One of the concerns as well is in the media. In the business sections there's a lot of talk regarding the Georges Bank moratorium, which goes until 2012, of oil and gas exploration or drilling on that particular bank, and there are concerns on both sides of the issue as to what effect it may or may not have on the fishery. I would just ask that if you have an opportunity down the road, you would look at that. If it's possible to do both, then that's great. If one affects the other in a very negative way, then that would be of concern.

I thank you very much for that.

**The Chair:** Mr. Kamp.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to thank you, Claire, for coming, and Mr. Hegge and Mr. Bevan as well. I appreciate getting to know a bit more about you and what you're planning to do.

I want to conclude with one final question for you. How do you see your work at Indian and Northern Affairs contributing to the files and the work that you're going to be doing in fisheries?

**Ms. Claire Dansereau:** Thank you for the question.

I consider myself to be in a permanent state of development, always, until I die, and every job that I take I hope to contribute based on what I bring, but I also learn while I'm there. I think it was quite fortuitous that I spent the last year at Indian and Northern Affairs, because there was a hole, I think, in my own development on the very significant and important files as they affect first nations in Canada.



So it was a very intensive learning experience for me while I was there, and that knowledge of course is now going to be, I think, beneficial to everything that we do, because the work with Canada's first nations is ever-increasing, and our ability to incorporate those concerns into our decision-making is going to grow.

My hope is that what I learned there will be of significant value to the work that we are doing increasingly at Fisheries and Oceans.

•(1040)

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Are these all of our questions?

I want to thank our witnesses once again for your time here this morning. Somewhere in the future we may have you back, either all of you together or separately. We'd just like to leave that door open.

Thanks again.

We're going to take a five-minute recess, folks. We have a little bit of committee business to take care of and then we'll finish up.

Thank you very much.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*

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