

**Union-Management Consultation Committee (UMCC) Meeting Ecosystems and  
Oceans Science Sector (EOSS) Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)**

**October 27, 2014, 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm 13W131, 200 Kent, Ottawa**

**Record of Decision**

Participants:

T. Swerdfager, ADM EOSS	S. Niven on behalf of A. Vezina, RDS (Maritimes)
D. Hains, DG CHS&OS	M. Saunders on behalf of C. Lowe, RDS (Pacific)
A. McPherson, DG ESD	T. Landry, PIPSC
W. Moore, DG, SRS	E. MacIsaac, PIPSC
G. Condran, Director, SRS (SBMB)	T. Panas, UEW
B. McCallum, RDS (Nfld & Lab)	D. Hoelke, UEW
G. Chouinard, RDS (Gulf)	R. Thériault, EOSS (Note Taker)
M. Wheatley, RDS (C&A)	M-C. Asselin. DFO LR
Y. de Lafontaine, RDS (Québec)	

Regrets:

P. Cameron, (IBEW)

I. Petrin, (CAPE)

**1. Welcome/Opening Remarks** The Assistant Deputy Minister, Mr. Trevor Swerdfager welcomed participants to the bi-annual meeting.

**2. Review Agenda**

The agenda was accepted.

**3. May 15 2014 Record of Decision (ROD)**

Record of Decision was accepted.

**4. Discussion item - Science Strategy**

As incoming ADM, Mr. Swerdfager shared his observations on the state of the Ecosystems & Oceans Science Sector. These observations have formed the basis of deliberations at the Science Executive Committee table, leading to the development of a short term suite of deliverables designed to build and reinforce the culture of scientific excellence of the Sector. To this end, the Science Executive Committee with the strong support of the Departmental Management Board has decided to launch the **Science 2016 Initiative**. The initiative is structured into eight\* interlaced streams of activities, each of which will be driven by a team led by a member of the Science Executive Committee.

1. Priority setting framework for annual national and regional implementation to align science activities with resource levels and program needs;

2. Partnership strategy for establishing alliances and collaborative mechanisms that advance departmental goals;
3. Suite of measures designed to foster a culture of scientific excellence, learning and development;
4. Strategy for maximizing the utilization of our buildings, laboratory facilities and equipment;
5. Modern suite of Information Technology (IT) systems and equipment and processes consistent with SSC and CIO requirements that is responsive to the sector's needs;
6. Comprehensive approach to organizing, storing and sharing science data;
7. Governance matrix that reflects current needs and departmental structures;
8. Comprehensive outreach strategy utilizing a mix of methods for communicating science achievements, products and advice internally and externally.

PIPSC considered this action-oriented approach as positive while underlying there may be engagement challenges. PIPSC offered help to management to engage the employees.

The ADM agreed that we have to better communicate and engage our people and welcomed the help of the Unions in this matter.

## **5. Updates on Action Items**

### **#1 – Progress on B17**

Mr. Moore reported on progress to date, including steps in revising the work descriptions of EOSS employees.

PIPSC underlined the importance for the employees of having work descriptions which reflect their duties. Management confirmed this is the key. Unions asked to have a separate call with OCCOE (Organization & Classification Centre of Expertise) to better understand some of the issues. Management agreed to organize this call.

### **#2 – Travel Update**

Mr. Moore shared a note that the Sector sent to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of DFO, outlining specific questions which were developed following a Union-Management meeting. Answers received by the CFO were very helpful to clarify challenges specific to our Sector's operations and provided guidance on core and non-core travel.

### **#3 – Budget Items - Targeted Review and Operating Budget Freeze (OBF)**

Mr. Moore reiterated that the Sector has progressed well on implementing deficit reduction exercises. He re-affirmed that the objective of the Sector is to manage the OBF review through careful management of attrition and vacancies.

Questions on the budget items:

Todd Panas from UEW asked if the Sector is on track with their objective and if there will be any shortfalls in Science. Management answered that they did not expect any shortfalls by the end of this fiscal year.

**6. Discussion item - Update on the DFO Wellness Committee**

The ADM reported on the status of internal discussion concerning the respect in the workplace initiative of the Wellness Committee. UEW expressed the view that it was more appropriate to have this agenda item discussed at either Committee level or the National UMCC. Further discussion will follow.

**7. Discussion item - Communication PIPSC**

PIPSC asked if there is a new communication strategy. Mr. Moore replied there is not, but each year the Sector identifies a number of activities which can be communicated to broader groups.

**8. B. Base Funding (additional item brought by PIPSC)**

PIPSC identified an item for further discussion: how the department manages recruitment and retention issues in ways that mitigate risk of loss of experts funded by B-Base resources.

**9. Roundtable and Adjournment**Mr. Panas thanked the ADM for his quick answer on emails. He agreed with the fact that DFO should share their laboratories spaces and gave an example of this good practice in the C&A region between the Freshwater Institute and the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Saunders from the Pacific region shared that the Joint Learning Program facilitated a workshop on mental health in the workplace which was valued by the employees.

Erland MacIsaac announced his retirement.

Next meeting will take place prior to the spring 2015 National Union-Management Consultation Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 16:00.

\* Please note that a 9<sup>th</sup> stream was added a few weeks following this meeting. 9. At-Sea Science: Sustainable at sea program that supports the long term needs of scientists and departmental decision-makers